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MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN THE HOME DEPARTMENT

1942

Adoration of the Kings

American Museum of Phc

By PAOLO VERONESE (1528-1588)

PAOLO CALIARI was born in Verona, and such was his pride in his birthplace that he added to his name the epithet Veronese. It was in Venice, however, that Paolo painted most of his great works. So wholeheartedly did he enter into the life of that cosmopolitan city, so strikingly do his pictures portray the prosperity and splendor of that seaport on the Adriatic, that he has been aptly termed "the painter of the glory of Venice."

In the year 1570 or thereabouts, the noble and wealthy Cuccina family, for whom he already had made several paintings, commissioned him to paint the *Adoration of the Kings*. The subject was to Veronese's liking, for it gave him opportunity to group a large number of figures and to array them in costumes of rich texture and bright colors. The result was an ambitious work which he carried through to a successful conclusion. The difficult composition is ingeniously done. The predominant colors are red, blue, orange, and greenish-gray. And the effect of the whole is one of great magnificence.

The original canvas—at last reports in the Dresden Gallery—is six feet high and fourteen feet long. The engraving reproduced above shows only the central figures. There are, in addition, some ten or a dozen more figures—the retinue of the kings, consisting of courtiers, servants, and pages, not to mention a horse and some other animals. In some of the secondary figures we undoubtedly have portraits of members of the Cuccina family. Having themselves put in the picture was their naïve way of saying that they wished to join with the kings in paying homage to the infant Jesus.

Veronese achieved his object without essaying anything novel in this representation of the nativity. He dressed the kings in the kind of robes worn by the richest potentates of his own day. He followed tradition in making them three in number; one aged, another middle-aged, and the third and youngest, a Moor or Nubian. They have brought their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh; and there is no mistaking their reverence.

The painting contains a number of other familiar and easily interpreted symbols. The ruined temple in the background speaks of the overthrow of paganism. Its downfall is assured, now that Christ has been born. The ox and the ass speak of the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. The heavenly light that falls upon the Babe declares his deity. In effect, it says: "It is here that the beholder of this painting should look, for this Holy Child is the hope of the world; at his feet we are to lay our richest treasures."

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MILES W. SMITH, Adult Leader
JOHN CALVIN SLEMP, Uniform Lessons

This Month

■ **"Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas Tonight!"** tells of Yuletide customs around the world. Miss Elizabeth S. Whitehouse reminds us that even in these days of strife Christmas still unites the followers of the Prince of Peace.

■ **"For the Shepherds, a Song"** is a Christmas worship service that can be used by a choric-speaking group or by a church choir. Mrs. Lucy Wetzel McMillin has been our most frequent contributor of dramatic material.

■ **"Watchman, What of the Night?"** by Evelyn W. Wells, has been planned for a Watch Night Service, but it may be used at any time before or after the holiday period.

■ **"The 'Usual Meeting' Will Be Held."** Commenting on this time-worn announcement, Mr. Richard Hoiland gives us the first of two articles on the young people's meeting.

Next Month

■ **"A Program for Christian Youth in Wartime"** will help leaders of the youth programs in churches and communities to develop a vital Christian program for these critical days.

■ **"The Rural Church Has a Future,"** according to the conviction of Dr. Mark Rich. Yet its problems will not be solved by delay nor its opportunities grasped by inaction.

■ **"If Our Democratic Institutions Are To Survive . . . ."** the American people must act according to ten principles stated by Dr. G. Lloyd Wilson, University of Pennsylvania.

■ **"Can Graded Lessons Be Used in a Small School?"** This question is answered by Doris Demaree, who actually works in one and used this kind of material.

■ **"Leadership for Today's Church"** will be discussed by Prof. H. A. Overstreet, College of the City of New York.

Baptist Leader

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR CHURCH AND CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

Vol. 4 DECEMBER, 1942 No. 9

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OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ A campaign to bring religion to bear upon the life of the city of London was launched by a special committee composed of twenty-eight leading representatives of the church and business, formed under the sponsorship of the Lord Mayor. Prominent members of the committee include: the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's, Lord Kindersley, Sir George Broadbridge, Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, pastor of City Temple; Dr. Sidney Berry, chairman of the Congregational Union, and the Rev. E. M. Aubrey, secretary of the Baptist Union. Addressing the committee's first meeting, held at the Mansion House, the Bishop of London declared that postwar planning is "not so much a matter of economics as it is the application of Christian principles."

■ Student body of the University of Bucknell (Lewisburg, Pa.) reached an all-time high with 1,326 students in attendance at the end of the first week of classes. Freshman enrollment, totaling 414, also sets a new record.

■ Waukegan (Illinois) Church Federation very aptly includes plans for servicemen in its program. It conducts a popular Sunday evening service in which a special appeal is made to the servicemen. In addition, the Federation has a part-time worker to carry on a ministry of counseling and helpfulness to the boys.

■ John A. Foote, who served as missionary in Japan, responded to the call of the Colorado Baptist State Convention and the Home Mission Society to work among the Japanese in the state of Colorado. Mr. and Mrs. Foote arrived in Denver in September to begin their new duties.

■ Through its World Emergency Fund the Northern Baptist Convention is now extending aid to pastors and other religious workers in military camp areas in Alaska, Arizona, North California, So. California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

The denomination has appointed Dr. M. E. Bratcher as director of the ministry to servicemen, working through the two home mission societies. Four special workers are entering the field to instruct churches in approved religious and recreational projects for servicemen. These service workers will co-operate with interdenominational agencies having charge of Christian ministry in camp and defense areas.

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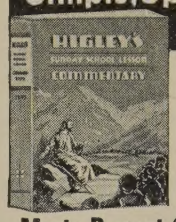

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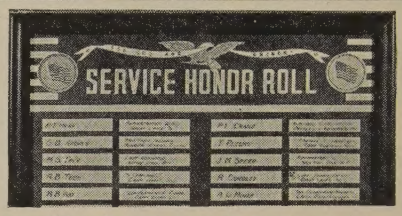

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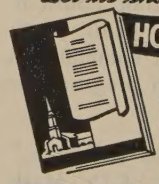

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OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ Twenty-five years ago, the members of the Union Baptist Church of Providence invited the few Portuguese people who lived near by to use the church building for their services. Gradually, as that entire neighborhood became inhabited by Portuguese people, the American membership of the Union Baptist Church decreased until not enough remained to continue regular church services. The members, therefore, voted to give the property and an endowment of over $30,000 to the Portuguese who recently held a rededication service, led by their pastor, Rev. John Oliveria.

■ During the past nine years, giving in the American Lutheran Church for beneficences has increased 57 per cent. This denomination (third largest Lutheran body in the United States) has a baptized membership of 571,545 and a communicant membership of 403,265. Its 2,000 congregations and preaching places are located in thirty states, the District of Columbia and Canada.

■ Voting to strengthen, rather than curtail, any mission field where operations are still possible, the United Lutheran Church, in biennial convention at Louisville, Ky., pledged its "unwavering support of the cause of foreign missions as a deciding factor in the Christianization of the world and in the establishment and maintenance of a just and durable peace among the nations."

Referring to South America as "the land of the future," Dr. Samuel Trexler, president of the body's Foreign Mission Board, called upon the church to create a postwar "world-mindedness" by sending refugee missionaries "up and down the churches telling of great accomplishments in the past and great aspirations and plans for conquests when peace has come."

Addressing a later session of the convention, Vice-president Henry Wallace told the delegates that "there is coming to the people of the United States an opportunity in respect to our neighbors to the south and the west (I refer to China, the Moslems and the Hindus of India and to lands adjacent) and it will be a missionary opportunity. Great as has been the work of Christian missionaries, I believe and am sure the day lies ahead when that work will be greatly enlarged."

■ Dr. Jessie Dell Crawford, former president of the Baptist Missionary Training School of Chicago, has been appointed instructor in Religion at Colby Junior College.

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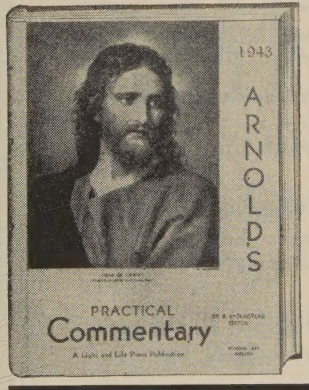

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OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ The new Fellowship House, a remodeled twelve-room, three-story dwelling, recently dedicated by the Omaha Baptist Union, carries on its work as a Christian Center. Growing membership in its Sunday school and other groups promises encouraging results.

■ The American Association of Women Preachers, at a three-day conference in Des Moines, Iowa, perfected its plans to ask that women preachers be admitted as "associate chaplains" in the armed forces. The Rev. M. Madeline Southard, president, said: "We need men and women in every branch of life—teaching, medicine, and preaching, too." Miss Southard added that during the first World War she had preached at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station and had spoken at a number of army camps in this war. Thirteen Protestant denominations are represented in the interdenominational organization. Its members include ministers, evangelists and directors of religious education.

■ Your State Promotion Offices still offer you the annual report of the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society for 1940-41. While some of the material is out of date, this carefully prepared report gives background information about every station where the Woman's Foreign Board carries on its work. You will find this report useful in your study of Baptist foreign missions. Write for your free copy *today*.

■ All the bars in Superior, Ariz., were closed on Sunday, September 27, according to an Associated Press dispatch. The Magma Copper Company declared that it could produce 250 more tons monthly if it could cut down its Monday absences from work. The next day only forty-eight were absent as compared with seventy-eight the preceding Monday. Three other towns who did the same reduced absences from 50 to 100 per cent.

■ Four million Bibles have been purchased by the Gideons for use of the armed forces of the United States. One-half of this number has been distributed through chaplains, and the remainder is in course of distribution.

■ Seventy-eight church bodies in twenty-eight countries now are members of the World Council of Churches. The latest group to join the international body is the Anglican Church of New Zealand. Recently, the Methodist Church of Brazil and an unidentified group in a Nazi-dominated land allied themselves with the Council. The South American church is the first of that country to join the World Council.

OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ The presidents of both the Northern Baptist and the Southern Baptist conventions participated in the elaborate and appropriate festivities and services which accompanied the dedication of the magnificent new church school and administration building of the Third Baptist Church in St. Louis, last October. In an associational letter to the other churches in its fellowship the Third Baptist Church reported a total of 539 new members during the associational year.

■ The importance of Baptist schools and colleges to the churches and to the nation will be stressed on Sunday, December 27, 1942, with the observance of Baptist Education Day. Hundreds of churches throughout the Northern Baptist Convention are expected to participate in this annual event. Through especially prepared sermons and worship services, the message of Christian higher education will be brought home to the denomination.

Dr. Newton C. Fetter, Assistant Secretary of The Board of Education, in announcing the observance, pointed out that unusual effort was being put forth this year to make Baptist Education Day meaningful. Dr. Fetter indicated four ways in which Baptist schools and colleges provide real service:

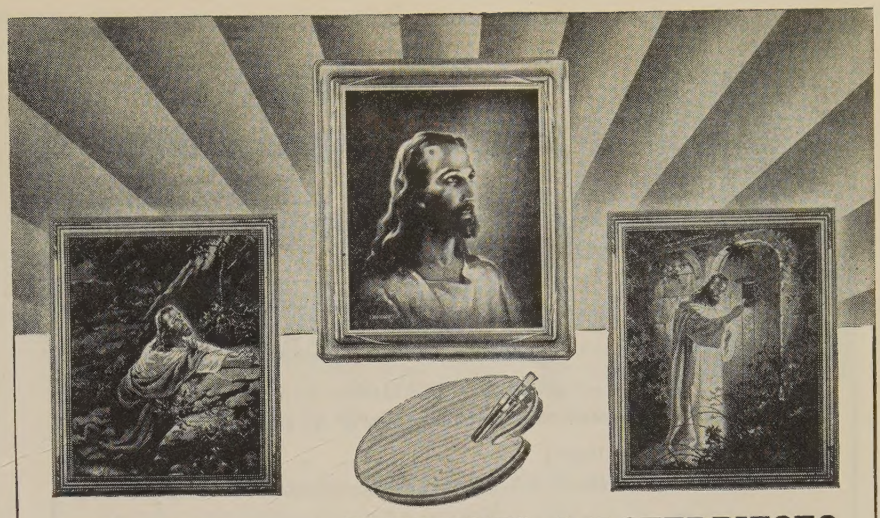
1. Baptist institutions are training grounds for denominational leaders. At the present time most of the leaders of the Northern Baptist Convention have been educated in Baptist colleges and seminaries.

2. The colleges have a definite Christian program, as well as a secular one. The presence of professors and others in the life of the school who have a definite Christian viewpoint reflects itself in the character and the religious growth of the students.

3. Because the colleges are privately endowed institutions they are free from outside influences, which helps to make them a more valuable asset in a democratic nation.

4. For the most part, the colleges are small enough to provide a "community" relationship and to help build in each of the young men and women the qualities of character and understanding which are essential to a well-balanced career. The interest of Baptists in their schools over the years has been indicated by generous giving and through their cooperation in other ways.

For the observance of Baptist Education Day this coming December special materials are being prepared for release to pastors and leaders of Baptist churches throughout the country.



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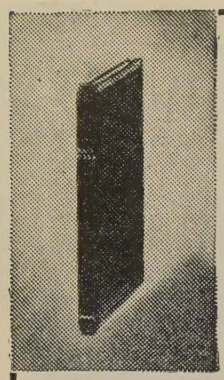

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5 And it shall be [a]as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of [b]Rephaim.

[a] ch. 5. 26. [b] Or, regard my set dwelling. • ch. 10. 16.

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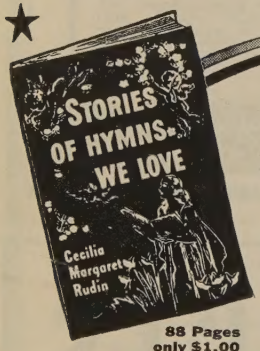
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OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ Dr. John N. Hestenes who served for twelve years as Director of Christian Centers for the Northern Baptist Convention retired in September. Under his leadership the number of our Christian centers grew from twenty-six to sixty-seven. Dr. John W. Thomas, who has been serving as Secretary of City Work for The American Baptist Home Mission Society, now directs the Christian center work.

■ Of the 28,500 automobiles rationed during August, clergymen received 430, representing 1.51 per cent of the total.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

■ **The Iowa Baptist Convention** for its Centennial Convention held in the First Baptist Church in Cedar Rapids which commemorated its one hundred years of work.

■ **Lake Avenue Baptist Church, in Pueblo, Colo.,** whose new house of worship was dedicated a few months ago and whose membership now numbers 273 with 11 awaiting baptism, whereas in February, 1940, there were but 90 members. Rev. L. O. Moore, pastor of the Lake Avenue Church, attributes the success of the work to the co-operation of the church members.

■ **The First Church, of Elizabeth, Pa.,** which celebrated its centennial in September. Rev. M. G. Dickinson serves as pastor.

■ **First Baptist Church of Sanbornton, N. H.,** for its 150th anniversary which was celebrated recently. Rev. W. S. Scott, pastor of the Sanbornton Baptist Parish, conducted the meetings held in honor of the occasion.

■ **Meriden Baptist Church, New Hampshire,** for its 150th birthday which recently was commemorated at a service during which the pastor, Rev. H. A. Childs told the history of the church.

■ **First Church, in Pueblo, Colo.,** on its seventieth anniversary. Rev. C. Spurgeon, the pastor, reports the largest congregations in many years.

■ **Pennsylvania's Hephzibah Church,** on its 150th anniversary. Rev. David F. Bartine directed the special services which commemorated the event a few months ago.

■ **First Baptist Church, of Chicago,** on its 109th birthday! Although this historic church prides itself on its past, it alertly seeks present possibilities for service and plans for an even more worthy future.

OF INTEREST TO BAPTISTS

■ **The Baptist Missionary Training School, in Chicago,** whose largest enrollment in ten years includes students representing twenty-four states and two foreign countries. Under the leadership of Mrs. Joseph Anderson, Administrative Secretary, the school anticipates one of its finest years in the experiment of Christian living.

■ **The Northern Baptist Seminary, of Chicago,** with its all-time peak enrollment of 335. A significant increase of college graduates manifests itself in the student body.

■ **The First Church of Emporium, Pa.,** whose members and pastor, Rev. Paul Raycroft, recently observed the seventy-fifth anniversary of the church.

■ **North Shore Baptist Church, Chicago,** for achieving a new record in its church history. Last year, the church received 264 new members. This is the largest number of any year in the history of the church.

■ **California's King City Community Baptist Church** which recently celebrated its golden anniversary. Pastor Berton Bronson who has served the church for many years suggested that for the occasion a goal of fifty new members be set.

■ **The American Sunday School Union** which recently observed its 125th anniversary with special services in Sunday schools throughout the country. According to its official paper, the Union's 160 missionaries traveled nearly 2,500,000 miles in ministering to 130,000 pupils in 3,000 Sunday schools.

■ **The First Church of Shenandoah, Pa.,** for its seventy-fifth anniversary, which was celebrated a few months ago under the leadership of Rev. Russell A. Pavy, pastor.

■ **Miss Maudian Wright** who attained a record of twenty-five years of perfect attendance at the Sunday school of the First Baptist Church, in Alton, Illinois.

■ **Rev. David J. Griffiths** for his twenty-one years of ministry to the Mansfield and State Road churches, in Pennsylvania, where a communion service was held to commemorate the event.

■ **Russian Baptists, of Erie,** who achieved a new house of worship. Dr. I. V. Neprash presided at the dedication services of the new Russian Baptist Church whose congregation numbers forty-two members.

I **RESOLVE** *for 1943 to give my church these benefits:*

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I also herewith resolve to purchase all our lesson materials from my own Publication Society, and thus to earn a 100-Percenter Certificate.

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A seminary professor believes that it is, but does not say so until he has defined "effective" and cleared up other vital considerations.

Effective Teaching in the

IS IT POSSIBLE

TEACHING and learning are two of the oldest interests of the human race. Long before there were formal schools, with schoolhouses and textbooks and teachers, people were acquiring knowledge and skill from preceptors. The primitive method was largely that of imitation of example, learning being acquired through experience.

With the invention of written language, teaching became primarily a matter of transmission. Stored-up knowledge, skills, belief, and ideals were handed down from generation to generation through the simple process of memorization and recitation. The Greeks expanded this primitive concept of teaching and learning to include investigation, experimentation, logical reasoning. The Romans added the element of practicality, insisting that education should be to the end of efficient citizenship. Medieval education brought transmission, logic, and philosophy, and obedience to authority, to the establishment of the dogma of the church and its support as a Catholic institution. The Reformation rediscovered preaching and teaching, which had gone into eclipse during the Middle Ages, but the reformers conceived education as a means toward their religio-political needs. Robert Raikes, with whom the Sunday school may be said to have begun, was interested in children for their own sakes, and used teaching as a means to the promotion of their welfare. Modern education has sought to combine elements of all these conceptions of teaching and learning, with especial emphasis on the development of the growing individual into a worthy member of a desirable society.

Teaching in the church school has, through the years, tended to follow the "transmissive" pattern. The assumption has been that if individuals were "taught the Bible" desired results would assuredly follow. During the early years of the Sunday school movement, primary emphasis was therefore placed on memorization of Bible passages. Later, with the coming of the Uniform Lesson System, Bible knowledge was much more broadly conceived. Cycles of lessons were devised, so that major portions of the Scriptures would be studied over a relatively short period of years. More and more, within recent years, the lesson selections and topics have been life-centered, making room for exposition and teaching related vitally to the interests and needs of the learners.

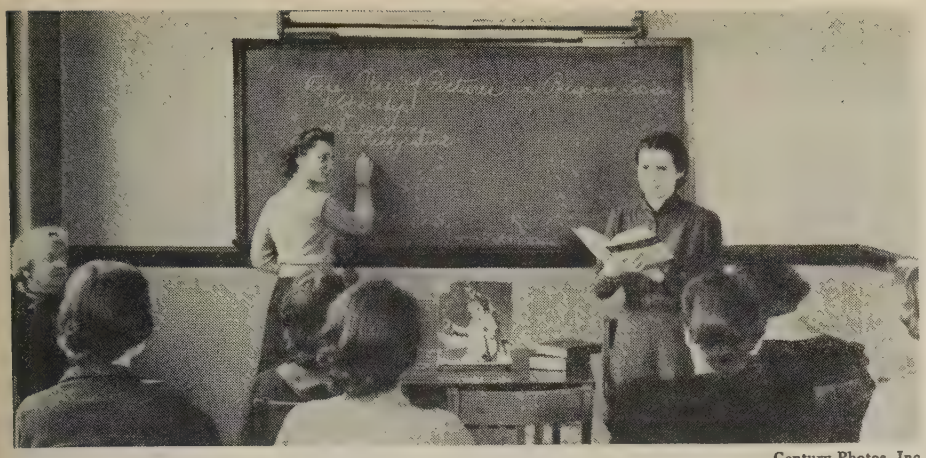
We therefore no longer confine our concept of teaching to the transmission of subject matter by a full teacher to an empty class. Teaching, we feel sure, is not just "causing another to know," but is rather a process of stimulation and guidance on the teacher's part, and of active response and participation on the learner's part. The test of teaching is to be found in the learner's fruitful living rather than in passive listening or in acquisition of inert facts.

When Is Teaching Effective?

The writer has on his desk the results of a Bible-knowledge test given recently to eighty-one tenth and eleventh-grade high school students. These boys and girls have attended Sunday school nearly all their lives. The questions were purely factual, such as, "Who was the first man?" "Name the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible)." "Who led the children of Israel from Egypt?" "Who was the first king of Israel?" "Who wrote most of the Psalms?" "Name the Four Gospels." "Name four of Paul's epistles." The average grade was 35 per cent! Is not this proof positive that the religious education of these young people was a failure?

Before judgment is made final, consider some other areas which might be tested. What changes in attitudes has church school attendance effected? What ideals have been implanted through contact with contagious Christian personalities? What life-determining choices have been made, particularly the choice of Christ and his way of life? What habits of thinking and behaving have been formed, consciously and unconsciously, through exposure to the great teachings of the Bible, its great characters, its inspiring history and poetry, its ethical and spiritual standards? What integration of character has been achieved through faith in God and loyalty to Christ? What social idealism has emerged that will make for altruism and good will in a world dominated by selfishness and war? What destiny has been fixed by a conscious relationship to God through Christ which has been indissolubly formed through oft-repeated experiences of worship? Although these values are better assured by accurate Bible knowledge, they are by no means dependent upon the ability to answer factual questions or reproduce memorized statements.

A young missionary was examining a group of Chinese applicants for church membership. Among those to be examined was an old Chinese woman seventy-three years of age. The examiner began by asking questions about the Bible—



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MORE ATTENTION MUST BE GIVEN TO THE SELECTION AND THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Church School...

By GAINES S. DOBBINS

R. Alfred Hassler

THE TEACHER'S PREPARATION MUST BE SYSTEMATIC, THOROUGH, AND EXTENSIVE

how many books in the Old Testament, how many books in the New Testament, who wrote the Pentateuch, who wrote the Psalms, who were the principal kings of Israel, the names of the major prophets, the names of the minor prophets, where Jesus was born, who were the twelve apostles, where Paul went on his first missionary journey, and the like. To almost all these questions the poor old woman shook her head, saying, "I don't know . . . . I don't remember . . . . I can't read."

The young missionary was discouraged. He was about to recommend that she be not received, when a veteran deacon interceded. "This old lady is one of our most faithful Christians," he said. "She always comes to our meetings, though she lives three miles away. She gives cheerfully what she can to every good cause. She used to have a terrible temper, but since she believed, she has become very kindhearted and patient. Everybody knows about it."

The missionary looked at her. Seventy-three years old and she might have gone before he would come around next year. He decided to give her another trial. "Who is God?" he asked. "God is our heavenly Father," she answered. "Who is Jesus Christ?" "He is my dear Saviour." "Where is he?" "Wherever I go, he is there." "Can you talk to him?" Her face brightened with understanding. "Yes, I can." "When do you talk to him?" "Why, very often. When I am working in the fields, when I am making bread, when I feel sad I talk to him and my heart is broadened." Her tongue was loosened. She was now on familiar ground. "I talk to him whenever I want to. Sometimes I have more to say and talk longer. Sometimes I have only one or two thoughts and talk short. Whatever I have in my heart, I say."

Recording the experience, the missionary later commented: "There was much about the Christian religion that this Chinese woman did not know. She still had much to learn as far as items of knowledge went. One thing was certain, however. She had had a religious experience that had changed her life. Would you not say that what she had learned entitled her to membership in any church of Christ the world around?" Of course you would!

Why Is Much Teaching Ineffective?

Granting that the knowledge test is not all-sufficient, and that there are by-products of inestimable value which transcend knowledge, let us not take for granted that these values will inevitably appear if one attends the church school with reasonable regularity.

Of first importance is the Christian personality and influence of teachers and officers. If religion is taught as well as caught, would people catch the spirit of Christ from some men and women who serve as teachers and leaders in the church school?

Of very great importance also are clear-cut and well-defined aims. If teachers do not definitely and intelligently seek to secure these results of Christian attitudes, ideals, choices, purposes, conduct, character, will these infinitely precious values emerge unsought? In every other field of specialized endeavor, success is not achieved without thorough preparation and expert skills. Have we any right to expect these highest of all results to be achieved by unprepared and unskilled teachers? In all other realms, the greater the value attached the higher the price that must be paid. Does it not verge on the sacrilegious to expect these supreme values in the realm of Christian personality without sacrifice of time and life on the part of the church school teachers and officers? In the secular schools utmost attention is given to equipment and materials of learning. May we hope for the most fruitful results in poorly equipped buildings where almost no attention is given to the choice and use of curriculum materials? The greatest thing about any co-operative group is its spirit. Are not the results bound to be disappointing if the spirit of the church and its school is narrow, mean, superficial, critical, passionless?

How May Teaching Be Improved?

Somehow we must lift the level of teaching in our church schools. It is not an easy task. The following suggestions may be found practical and profitable:

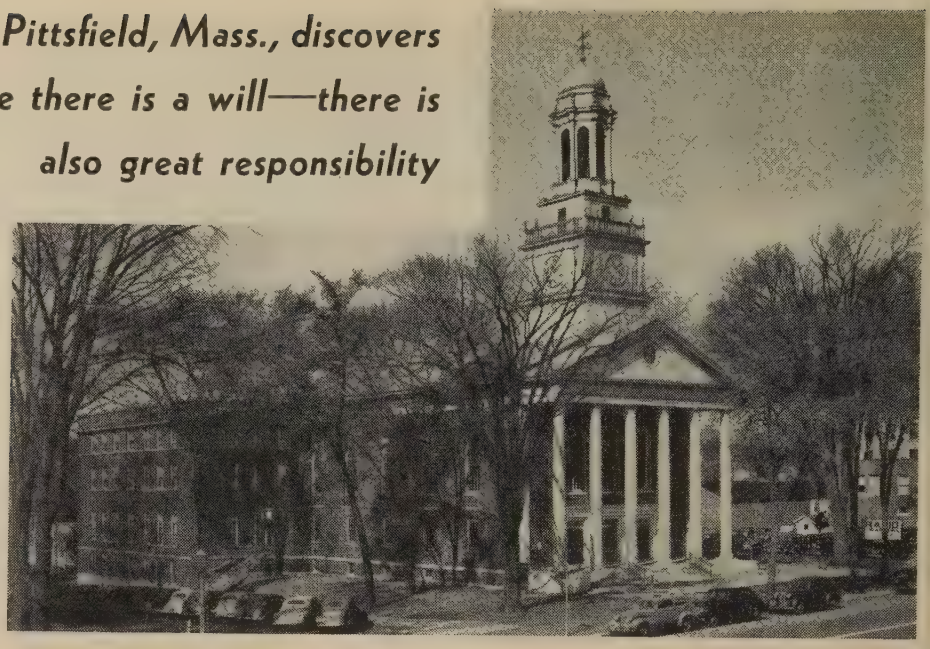
1. The conception of the teaching-learning process must be broadened, and

2. The objectives of teaching must be much more clearly defined.

3. Vastly more attention must be given

(Please turn to page 16)

The First Baptist Church of Pittsfield, Mass., discovers that where there is a will—there is also great responsibility



THIS BEAUTIFUL, SERVICEABLE CHURCH IS LOCATED ON A MAIN THOROUGHFARE

TO ONE HE GAVE

ALMOST half a million dollars suddenly dumped into a collection plate! The smartest college professor in America could never have figured out an examination more inclusive nor conclusive than that one. Either the church would fail miserably in its new stewardship, or it would pass with flying colors.

"Here you are, gentlemen," said a lawyer to the trustees of the Pittsfield, Mass., First Baptist Church four years ago. "Here is a check for $400,000 from the estate of Nelson and Fannie Lawton."

What the lawyer didn't say was, "Well, there's another good church on its way out." Because he had seen many times how legacies cut into church attendance, giving, and interest. "What's the use of my sacrificing to give?" he had heard members of the new-rich churches ask, "The church has all the money it needs, anyhow."

Suppose that much money were left to your church. Would you begin dreaming of things to buy? You could buy a lot with $400,000. Perhaps you'd dream about pipe organs jumping over a fence like sheep—and you could count up to forty of them. Perhaps you would dream of carpeting, acres of it, eighty thousand yards of it—or hundreds of stained-glass windows, or thousands of luxurious chandeliers. The money would build a new edifice as breathtaking and inspiring as most in the land, with still enough left over for a recreation building and a parsonage.

The money would buy any of those things.

Or it would buy men and women.

First Church had to decide whether to spend its money for itself or for others. It may be forever glad that it made the right decision. Let those with less noble callings spend their money for themselves! First of Pittsfield would spend for the healing of sick souls and bodies—the strengthening of the Christian program.

Perhaps their heritage and their surroundings had something to do with it. Pittsfield is in the heart of the lovely Berkshire hills country. The First Baptist Church is in the heart of Pittsfield, and has been since 1772. This is the church of Charles P. MacGregor, of Edward Holyoke, of Gove G. Johnson, of Maurice A. Levy, and now of Paul Lee Sturges. Such a history has taught the church that people are what count, not things, although the church house itself is comfortable enough.

The architecture is colonial, permanent-looking brick and stone. An old hymn tune drifts out from the Edgar Ford bells in the tower. Inside, you see the divided chancel with the baptistery in the center, its red velvet curtain forming a rich background for the cross. And inside, you also see men and women, boys and girls. Dad is there with his family, and they are there because they want to be. Because they know, young and old alike, "This is our church!"

Five Talents

The pastor, Paul Lee Sturges, and the church leaders knew that such a huge sum of money could very easily burn a hole in the church treasury. Careful, prayerful planning almost magically transformed the legacy into a stimulant and a challenge, instead of a drug and an excuse. When I asked the treasurer why such a large bequest did not kill the spirit of giving in First Church, he nodded toward the pastor and said, "We had fortunate leadership."

A small mortgage was paid first, and then the church voted to use no more of the principal but to put it in trust. It also decided to use at least one-half the income for benevolence, remembering that those who receive liberally must also give liberally.

And here is something! The number of givers to both missions and current expenses has steadily increased since this money was received. Seven hundred sixty-eight members out of one thousand are pledging this year. The church budget is $30,000, of which $12,000 is for Kingdom extension. And members give $18,000 of the $30,000 each year.

Paul Sturges says, "Pittsfield has an obligation. To whom much is given much will be required. It has pleased me to see in our people a growing sense of responsibility to the community and to all Kingdom interests. The Lawton income has not, and will not, become a substitute for the giving of the living members. But it has made possible many projects which have aroused the interest of all our people and caused them to want to have a share."

Kingdom Extension

If you wanted to sum up the story of First Church in few words, you would

NINE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED THE NEW ENGLAND BAPTIST SCHOOL OF METHODS AT OCEAN PARK, MAINE, FORM AN ENTHUSIASTIC NUCLEUS OF SENIOR FELLOWSHIP, MAKING FALL PLANS WITH THE PASTOR AND THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION. BELOW IS THE BOARD OF KINGDOM EXTENSION, WHICH HANDLES THE MISSION'S MONEY

FIVE TALENTS

By LEONARD L. CAMPBELL

ABOVE IS THE ELM STREET CHAPEL. BELOW, THE EPWORTH MISSION, NOW UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MISS LENORE KRUSE

only have to say, "Missionary interest and activity." That is the outstanding feature of the church, its distinguishing fingerprint. The leadership group responsible for handling the outreach money is called the Board of Kingdom Extension.

With a missionary budget of $12,000 a year, the church decided to give about 60 per cent, or $7,200, through established channels such as the unified budget of the Northern Baptist Convention. This leaves $4,800 for special projects. Then the story got around that there was a Santa Claus in town just waiting to be asked for a donation. Representatives from every money-seeking cause around came scurrying in, then sadly left. "Those guys in there are no Santy Claus," one of them, as he was leaving, told an arriving colleague. "They're hard-headed business people!" And they were. The Board decide on their own projects, and they spent their money as carefully as efficiency experts.

Hardly ever do the members of the Board give the entire amount needed. They offer the "last $200," or "the last $500," and others are encouraged to give.

Ralph Ostegren was about to close his first year as director of the Boston City Mission Society with a deficit of $1,700. "If we give you $500," the Board asked, "do you think you can raise the rest of the amount?"

"Just try me!" he answered. The drive was successful. Baptists of the entire state have responded to the call of the City Mission Society.

G. Pitt Beers of the Home Mission Society was worried about conditions among the Negroes in Brooklyn. Communism and other subversive doctrines were creeping in. He wanted to revive and strengthen the Negro Education Center. The Pittsfield church started the ball rolling by giving $1,000 a year toward the salary of Rev. C. H. Pearsons, and the Queens Federation and Brooklyn Negro churches followed by providing the balance necessary.

Other Baptist churches in the Berkshire area have been helped by their Pittsfield fairy godmother. The auditorium of the church at Cheshire was badly in need of paint. The trouble was, the job would cost too much money; it was out of the question. Cheshire members shook their heads sadly, and figured they'd have to get along as best they could with the auditorium the way it was. Then Pittsfield offered $200 of the amount if the local church first provided the balance. Cheshire promptly took the dare and raised *twice* her share! With Pittsfield's contribution they had enough not only to redecorate the auditorium but to renovate the basement, install a new furnace, and paint the outside of the building. That's an outstanding job of pump priming in any man's language!

The Federated church at Becket had gone through a disastrous flood away back when, and nothing much had been done to restore it. It wasn't that the Becket people needed ambition. It was just that they needed $2,500. With a generous offer from Pittsfield, and with the help of the Congregationalists, Baptists of the state, and their energetic pastor, F. P. Freeman, they raised the entire amount. Now there's a beautiful little church nestling among the hills. More consecrated pump priming!

Another enticing gift resulted in $1,500 at Adams, and that church has a new roof and other repairs. Williamstown has a new chimney. The church and parsonage at Egremont have new roofs—and the story goes on and on.

A lodge at Ataloa, Baptist girls' camp at Ocean Park, Maine, is called Lawton Lodge. The Royal Ambassador Camp has a new administrative hut built by the Pittsfield church in memory of Dr. Maurice Levy.

But the Board of Kingdom Extension does not spend its money only for "things," to improve plants so that more and better work can be done. Its emphasis is, rather, on the *people* who are helped by the *things*. For instance, a

(Please turn to page 16)

Your Christmas

PLAN IT WITH CARE AND MAKE IT

By AUGUST M. HINTZ

THERE is wisdom in the commercial slogan, "Do Your Christmas Shopping Early." Yet, although it is repeatedly emphasized every winter, large numbers of people continue to make second-best choices at the last minute. Then follows the popular resolution, "Never again," which is promptly forgotten until after the next Christmas.

Many church leaders are equally guilty of similar inexcusable procrastination. After each less-than-best Christmas program they cry, "Why didn't someone start our program earlier so that it could have been more impressive and significant?"

The purpose of this article is to suggest that this year you avoid the feeling of having failed to make the most of Christmas, one of the church's greatest opportunities, by planning NOW to make your Christmas program all that it should be.

This has been important in former years but it's even more important this year because:

1. *The Christmas Star Shines Brightest in a Black Sky.* Our sky is black. Everywhere there is suffering and sorrow. "Blood, Sweat and Tears" is to be our lot for days without end. Man's peace and good will toward man have been exchanged for war and ill will. The only bright ray of hope for the future is the star that shines with God's promise of peace and good will.

2. *People Are Hungering for Religion.* As individuals, people are slowly but surely losing their faith in material things, because the world of things is toppling. Faith in war is even now prefaced with doubts, although it is generally viewed as today's necessity. Faith in man's goodness is dead. Faith in oneself is weak. Therefore, there is no other place to turn for a faith that will sustain and strengthen, except to the Christmas message which has never been tried and found wanting. At this crucial time, the church must not fail Christ.

3. *Time Waits for neither Man nor Cause.* The earliest is never too early—it is sometimes almost too late. The best program is one planned and prepared by the combined thought and wisdom of many minds. This takes much time. Therefore, start NOW.

A master committee, whose duties it will be to evaluate the programs presented in your church during the past few years and to determine which features shall be preserved and which shall be eliminated, to determine the general type of program to be presented, and to name all other committees, should be appointed at once by your church school superintendent or council. Next year, this committee should be appointed in the spring, so that they can submit their plans and appoint the subcommittees early in the fall.

The Program's Message

An important question to ask before the program is planned and ready for presentation is, "What message will this program convey?" If it fails to instruct people how to live nearer Christ, or if it fails to inspire them so to live, it probably will not be worth while. The Christmas program should emphasize the message of Jesus Christ. This is the church's specific business—the church is the only institution which exists for that purpose. Therefore, the committee should determine how their program can present Christ's principles of living in so practical and challenging a way that each individual present will examine the extent of Christ's influence in his daily living.

American people are engrossed in the difficult job of winning this war. Unchristian movements of hatred with revenge as their aim are struggling for positions of predominance in today's world. In *The Christian Century* for September 9, 1942, Walter W. Van Kirk in his article, "British Churches in the Crisis," refers to the "Never Again Movement" in England, headed by Lord Robert Vansittart, "which makes its appeal to the primitive passions of nihilism." Vansittart states in *Black Record*: "The German . . . . has always been the barbarian, the war power, the enemy—furtive or avowed—of humanitarianism, liberalism and Christian civilization, and the Hitler regime is no accidental phenomenon but the logical fruit of German history, the German in excelsis."

Dr. Van Kirk states further: "I am happy to be able to report that not a single British church leader with whom I talked subscribed to this 'butcher-bird' thesis of Lord Vansittart. But there it is—the blatant screaming of a dog-eat-dog philosophy. And what is more, there are indications that the poison of an uncontrollable vindictiveness is eating its way into the minds and hearts of vast numbers of people in the conquered lands of Europe. While in England I was told that the names and addresses of thousands of Quislings and of Nazi functionaries in the Lowlands are being secretly filed in anticipation of what is described as 'Axing Day.' I was informed that all the axes and hatchets in Holland had been bought up and laid away against the day of the Great Revenge."

Although movements of hatred have not reached such proportions in America, when larger numbers of America's flower of mankind are captured, tortured, or killed, movements similar to Britain's "Never Again Movement" will try to become firmly entrenched in our land.

Possibly hatred is necessary to win the war. Perhaps a man cannot be an effective soldier without it. Only a Christian soldier can know.

On the other hand, after winning the war the peace must be won. This is of equal importance. Hatred in the driver's seat cannot win it. President Roosevelt has said, "In victory we shall seek not vengeance but the establishment of an international order in which the spirit of Christ shall rule in the hearts of men and of nations." In *The Problems of Lasting Peace*, by Herbert Hoover and Hugh Gibson, this important statement is made and proved: "Certainly, experience shows that no nation can be punished as a whole and at the same time leave any hope of lasting peace. This endless treadmill of punishment must be stopped in the world if there is to be real peace. Victory with vengeance is ultimate defeat in the modern world. We can have peace or we can have revenge, but we cannot have both."

The Christmas message combats hatred. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man." People attending the Christmas program should be reminded of Christ's teachings—the brotherhood of man, God's eternal love for all mankind, God's supreme sacrifice for man—and that spirit, the power of forgiving love, should be applied to our own living. "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

How these elements can be best pre-

Program

TRULY CHRISTIAN

sented in your program, only your committee can decide.

General Suggestions

1. *Co-operation.* This is a day when Christians must truly represent the church when they sing,

"Like a mighty army moves the church of God
Brothers we are treading where the saints have trod:
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity."

Jesus said, "If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." John Dickinson was aware of this important truth when he wrote "The Liberty Song" in 1768,

"Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all!
By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall!"

This is not to suggest an organic union of churches. As Dr. Elliott said in the President's Address at the Northern Baptist Convention in Cleveland, "When contrary bodies unite they do not necessarily lose their contrariness." But, he also said, "Men who have Christ have more in common than all the differences in the world." Therefore, American Christians in these days ought to be emphasizing their points in common rather than their differences. Church co-operation should prevail in the presentation of Christmas programs, especially in small communities where there might otherwise be three or four poorly prepared programs presented on Christmas Eve, each competing with the others.

2. *Foreigners.* Inasmuch as "Good Will Toward Man" ought to be a part of the message conveyed by the program, if there are citizens of a foreign race living in your city it might be possible to have some of them participate in your program. Perhaps a former resident of one of America's enemy countries is a good citizen in your community—why not have him appear on your program? Anything to promote understanding would add to the program's value. Impressive community services are often held about a tree set up in a square or park near the center of the city. Some may attend such an open-air service who would hesitate to attend a service within a church.

3. *The Issue of Santa Claus.* Some church leaders are feeling that the Christian meaning of Christmas is not emphasized by the coming of Santa Claus and his distribution of gifts to everyone attending the service. Whereas Christmas ought to be recognized as a time of giving, his visit often leaves with children the impression that it is a time of receiving. After all, Christmas originated because of God's supreme sacrifice in sending "His Only Begotten Son." Why emphasize something else, when this is the message the world needs?

If it is a long-standing tradition for Santa Claus to visit your church, why not have him do something more worth while this year than "passing out gifts"? Why not have the children bring gifts for the children in some mission school such as Kodiak, rather than gifts for themselves? Why not have the young people purchase gifts for Japanese young people who have been interned for the duration? If there are slum dwellers near your church, why not purchase practical gifts for them? Then, if Santa Claus must come, he can dedicate these gifts which are being given to others in the interest of peace and good will among men.

It makes no difference how this is done, so long as the real meaning of the birth of Christ is emphasized. Certainly, this is not the year to neglect this great opportunity to give children, young people, and adults an opportunity to give themselves more completely to the Way of Jesus Christ.

"Where Is He That Is Born?"

By Grace Noll Crowell

Up from the hearts of millions everywhere,
Groping for light, the question will arise
This Christmas Eve as on the starlit air
It rose from the lips of seekers, old and wise:
"Where is he that is born . . . ." Oh, where is he?
The night is dark—we have lost the way somehow . . . .
Yet all the while, as he waited for the three
Wise Kings of old, the Christ is waiting now:

Ready to give his peace to all who come;
Ready to give the rest we long have sought—
O Master, we have been so blind and dumb,
We have been so fearful, anxious and distraught—
Help us to find these by the lifted light
Held high within thy hands for men tonight.

The "Usual Meeting" Will Be Held!

By RICHARD HOILAND

DON'T do it!

The fact of the matter is that the "usual meeting" doesn't have a very good reputation.

Many a youth associates "usual meeting" with uninteresting meetings. You know what I mean—poorly prepared leaders, long pauses, pious and stilted remarks about unreal subjects, lack of attention often bordering upon irreverence. These are some of the things that come to mind when one hears that the "usual meeting" is to be held.

Let us look in on one of these meetings with a view to discovering, if possible, what needs to be done about it.

The meeting was advertised to begin at six-thirty. It was that way on the church bulletin board. So the visitor, a stranger in the community, naively presented himself at the church on time. In fact, he was five or six minutes ahead of time. When the door of the church did not yield to his effort he sat down on the steps to wait. Several minutes passed. At twenty minutes to seven he looked again at the bulletin board, so as to make sure that six-thirty was the hour for the meeting to begin. His information was correct. The bulletin board indicated very clearly that the meeting was scheduled to begin at six-thirty.

Five minutes later, just as the stranger was about to leave, a dozen young people drove up to the church in two cars, unloaded, and hurried toward the church door. They, too, discovered that the door was locked. And no one had a key! After going into a huddle, one of the young men started off on a dog trot in the general direction of the corner drug store. By this time the stranger, who had made his way into the group, learned that when the janitor failed to put in his appearance, the key to the church could be secured from the druggist!

In a few minutes the key-bearer returned, the door was opened, and the group, which by this time had been enlarged by the appearance of seven or eight additional members, entered the church. In a basement room, presently, things began to move more rapidly. For one thing it was soon discovered that no one in the group was able or willing to play the piano. So the group decided to dispense with all singing until someone arrived who could or would play. In the meantime, the leader of the program was trying frantically to persuade some of the members to accept certain pieces of printed matter which obviously had been clipped from a magazine or paper. Two or three finally yielded, reluctantly, and agreed to read their part at the appointed time.

At three minutes past seven, exactly thirty-three minutes late, the leader officially opened the meeting and asked the group to stand and repeat the Lord's Prayer. Then followed a lively session of about twelve minutes, consisting chiefly of announcements and other business matters. One young man made a very earnest plea in the interests of a forthcoming city-wide rally, and urged everyone to attend so that they might bring home the attendance banner. The chairman of the Social Committee called attention to the regular monthly social which would have to be postponed still another week. No definite word was available as to just where the party would be held. Further announcement would be made next Sunday.

Next, the young woman in charge of the meeting announced the topic and read the Scripture lesson. Then she called for sentence prayers, and, as no one responded, led in prayer herself. The three members with reading assignments remained seated as they read their parts. As might have been expected, the stranger noticed that only a few seemed to give attention to the reading. Too, one of the readers had considerable difficulty in pronouncing some of the words in his clipping, and so his reading was improperly punctuated by half-suppressed laughs from the group.

When the third clipping had been read the meeting was officially closed, the entire group standing and repeating the so-called Mizpah benediction. As the members began to scatter, someone shouted out the topic for next Sunday and urged everyone to come. The stranger put on his coat, picked up his hat, and left the church. No one spoke to him.

Unfortunately, this picture is not simply the product of someone's imagination. This is a true story. It actually happened. The stranger was a young man who wanted to find out just what is going on in the average young people's meeting on Sunday night. Himself a Christian and a member of a young people's society, he honestly wanted to know how other societies were getting along. In particular, he had been wondering why his own organization was not attracting more young people to the meetings. So, as a result of several visits, such as the one described above, he went back to his own society pretty much convinced that mediocrity was the rule rather than the exception, and that his own organization was above rather than below the average.

This very week scores of meetings like the one described above will be held. When the final hymn has been sung and the benediction has been pronounced, the best that can be said about what took place is that it was "just another meeting." The "usual meeting" will have been held. And yet even those who are actively identified with just that type of program often wonder why the meetings are so poorly attended. "Why don't more of our young people attend our meeting?" is a familiar complaint these days.

Instead of facing such a question frankly and objectively, the tendency is to look for the trouble in something entirely outside the circumstances that produce the problem. It is, for example, much easier to put the blame on commercialized Sunday amusements than to admit that the meeting is not sufficiently interesting to attract even the youth already identified with the church.

Another scapegoat is *Topic* magazine. "No wonder we don't have better attended meetings," a pastor wrote in a while ago; "what we need is bigger and better topics." Some would have more printed material, and others insist there should be less. Some would have topics of one particular type or character, while others call for the exact opposite. In either case, of course, the problem of uninteresting meetings and small attendance would be solved if only *Topic* magazine were changed in one direction or the other—or both at the same time!

What kind of topic helps could possibly have made any difference in the meeting described above? The fact of the matter is that the present *Topic* quarterly is probably the best magazine of its kind our denomination has ever published. When used regularly and intelligently it will meet the needs of the great rank and file of our youth groups Sunday after Sunday.

To be sure, a given topic may have more interest for one group than another. In the main, however, the difficulty is not with the topic or with the topic treatment as such, but with the way in which it is used. No topic, however appealing it may be either in subject matter or in writing style, can possibly produce an interesting meeting unless certain other essential factors are present. Just so, no topic treatment, however ingeniously developed, can take the place of careful planning and honest effort on the part of those in charge of the meeting.

Young people who really want interesting meetings can have them if they are willing to pay the price. It is no longer a matter of chance; for we know exactly what such a meeting takes. As is true of other important enterprises, there are certain well-defined steps which, if carefully followed, will produce the desired results. These steps, or methods, in program building will be discussed in the January issue of Baptist Leader.

Do You Know That—

THE CHAPEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS, REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA, WAS RECENTLY JUDGED ONE OF THE TEN MOST BEAUTIFUL COLLEGE CHAPELS IN THE U.S. FOUNDED 1909, REDLANDS IS A BAPTIST SCHOOL

WHAT IS PERHAPS THE MOST HISTORIC BAPTIST GAVEL IN THE WORLD WAS PRESENTED TO WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE ON MAY 23, 1939, BY MR. CLAUDE W. KELLY, HOT SPRINGS, ARK. IT IS MADE OF MATERIAL FROM MANY SPOTS IMPORTANT IN BAPTIST HISTORY

WILLIAM H. DOANE, TRUSTEE AND BENEFACTOR OF DENISON UNIVERSITY, WAS A DEVOUT BAPTIST; FAMOUS AS COMPOSER OF SUCH HYMNS AS "SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS," "TELL ME THE OLD, OLD STORY," "RESCUE THE PERISHING," "PRECIOUS NAME, O HOW SWEET," AND "DRAW ME NEARER"

The Advance *Advances!*

THE Baptist Church School Advance got off with a bang in the First Church, Syracuse, N. Y., September 27 to October 4. Here is what happened.

Out came an attractive folder, faultlessly printed on good-quality paper and having the "feel" of distinction. In it the objectives of Advance were stated and the committees and teams were named, so that at a glance the church member in the pew, as well as the leaders and teachers of the church school, might know what Advance means and what it proposes to do.

Official starter and general keynoter was John T. Clough, Advance chairman of the First Church. This, in part, was his message as printed in the folder:

"Advance has been and is an evangelistic zeal, a spiritual enthusiasm, a vision-builder. It is Christ's sending of the Twelve and the Seventy applied to today's church school.

"Advance was born in peacetime; now the world is afire and we face a crisis which depletes our ranks hour by hour.

"NOW we are faced with the denial if not the destruction of that Christian character, modeled after the manhood of the Master, on which we have built our hope and our living. Now all that Christ stood for stands with its back to the wall.

"NOW—as never before, we dare not give over to a psychology of defeat. Now as never, against the confusion that shall come with peace, we must build Christian character."

Next came the pastor, Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, declaring that the church schools, "in spite of their limitations, have probably done more than any other one agency to keep alive the message of the Bible in the hearts of the people." After making a direct appeal for people to enroll in the First Church school, and to enlist in one of the classes, Dr. Dahlberg wrote: "You will find it one of the best experiences of your life . . . . you will be carrying on the high Christian purpose of our colonial fathers who came to New England to 'Advaunce and greatly expand the gospill of Jesus Christ.'"

Then came Edward F. Beadel, church school superintendent, with this clear statement of the purpose of Advance: " . . . . to educate people so that they may enjoy a full and abundant life, and through their works and example, spread the doctrines of Christ throughout the world, to the end that all men may live together as brothers, the sons of one God."

And where shall we start? In the home, in the church, and in the community. We must start where Advance starts, *and we must start!* Syracuse is well on its way. Let others follow.

Effective Teaching in the Church School

(Concluded from page 9)

to the selection and the training of teachers and officers.

4. Transmissive methods must be supplemented and vitalized by creative experience.

5. Tests of results must include far more than Bible knowledge as such.

6. Teaching and learning must be made dynamic by the motives of evangelism, missions, the sharing of Christ with others.

7. Better materials and better equipment must be used to greater advantage.

8. The purposes of Christ for the enrichment of human life must be made dominant.

9. The unreached multitudes must be attracted by life-changing results.

10. A wrecked world must be rebuilt by regenerate men and women who have been so taught that they possess the mind and the will of Christ.

Can all this be done? It *must* be done, or we shall fail Christ and humanity in this our day of supreme opportunity and need!

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To One He Gave Five Talents

(Concluded from page 11)

Revolving Scholarship Fund has been set up to help educate the church's worthy young people. With the aid of this fund, young people also go each year to conferences like Ocean Park, Northfield, and the Westminster Choir Summer School. The "youth problem" is no longer a problem here.

First of Pittsfield proves that a heavily endowed church can enter the kingdom of heaven if it spends for others rather than for itself.

In "Jerusalem"

First Church has not only gone into "Judea" and into "Samaria," but it has done some fine work in "Jerusalem." Paul Sturges puts it this way, "We have become community conscious."

A mission Sunday school is conducted by First Church workers at Elm Street Chapel. This building has a new roof and an adequate heating plant.

In another section of the city, the Epworth Mission had been almost abandoned. Paul Sturges, as president of the local council of churches, led that body to undertake the rejuvenation and enlargement of the work. His own church offered to stand back of the project with a sizable share of the yearly expenses. Churches of the entire city became interested and helped. Now Miss F. Lenore Kruse, a graduate of the Baptist Institute of Philadelphia, is at work there, and the Pittsfield churches have a busy Christian center.

A Chinese Sunday school meets in the Pittsfield church each Sunday afternoon.

The Sunday morning services are broadcast for an hour each week. Stacks of letters from all over the countryside prove that the idea is a good one.

"Family Worship"

Even if First Church did not have an endowment, it would have an unusual story about the development of its progressive Religious Education program. Associated with the pastor on the staff is a full-time Director, Miss B. Myra Whittaker who has recently taken the place of Miss Bettina I. Gilbert. Miss

CHINESE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT PITTSFIELD

Gilbert, after five years with First, has taken a similar position in Seattle, Washington. With its splendid equipment and splendid leadership, a fully correlated program of Christian Education has been developed which succeeds in bringing every member of the family to church.

Two girls about ten and eleven sat across from me in the morning church service. At the close I asked, "Did anyone make you come or did you come because you wanted to?"

One answered, "Oh, we love it."

I put my question to an attractive young woman near the door. "Do you think this is a good church, and if so, why do you like to come here?"

Without hesitation she answered, "Because young people are a real part of the church. We are not just getting ready to take the places of the older people someday. We feel that we are an important part of the church right now."

A young married man was greeting people in the vestibule. This time I asked, "What makes the work of this church outstanding?"

He thought a moment and said, "The projects sponsored by the Board of Kingdom Extension."

I asked a group of women about church suppers. "I suppose you don't hold suppers and fairs now to raise money—since the church received the legacy."

One of them looked up indignantly. "Indeed, we didn't have money-making schemes in the church for many, many years before the money came!"

Then I asked, "Well, what do you women do in this church?"

"Do?" another spoke up. "This is such a busy church that everyone seems to have plenty to do. Our missionary and religious education programs use a good many women. And we do work in the kitchen some—although not for profit."

When I talked with the pastor I found that his first interest was not the endowment income. He was eager about how the church is living up to its slogan, "Where the family worships together." The unified program—now in its seventh year—is planned with this in mind. Co-operation between the church and the home is carefully guarded.

First of Pittsfield is a four-choir church. One hundred and fifteen people make up these choirs. All four groups are robed and present each Sunday morning. A singer is graduated from one choir into another and by the time he gets to the senior choir he is well trained. One or two choirs sing an anthem each Sunday and all help with responses and hymns. On Sunday evenings after a fellowship supper the director of music trains young people in church music appreciation. This whole music program is a purposeful activity. It is evangelism. It is worship.

No one around the church says, "Just look at what we have done." Instead they're saying, "First Church could do more." The large endowment has helped, of course, but the joy and satisfaction of what is being done make the members of this church want to share in the program.

Where there's a will—there's tremendous responsibility. Pittsfield has multiplied its talents—perhaps because it knew that if it buried its five talents it would also bury itself.

Community Newspaper Will Boost Churches

The Fourth Front is the name of a new community newspaper edited by laymen of six denominations in a Minneapolis residential district. This co-operative project is based upon the idea that beyond the military "first" and "second" fronts, and beyond the economic or "third" front, there is a "fourth" front, which is the battle line of the neighborhood church.

Six churches (one of them a Baptist) are working together through this newspaper "to show the Church as it really is—an active, virile force in the neighborhood, the center of worship, the center of social activity for men, women, and children of all creeds and classes."

On the back page of the newspaper, which is tabloid size, is a map of the entire district with the locations of the churches starred and the caption, "Here are our six churches, make your choice, and come."

Church School Workers' Conference

WAYS OF TEACHING

By B. G. FIELD

DECEMBER, the month of Christmas! Always the song of the angels sounds clearer then, bringing the world anew its message of peace and good will. In lands where Christ is known and loved people always are warmed by His spirit at Christmas. Yet it was in a December that tragedy came upon us and plunged us into war. They stand in bitter contrast, those two—the coming of the Christ child and war!

Only the grace of God can erase the barriers to world peace that have arisen, and turn hate into good will. But if we are to keep our integrity as teachers of the message of Christ in these days we must preserve our own Christian outlook. While forces all about us kindle the flames of international hatred, we must find ways to live the way of love that we teach; we must let God's grace work through us to restore international sanity and good will. For living has ever been a stranger teacher than any number of words. The sincere demonstration in our own lives of the Way we long to teach is our most effective "way of teaching." Other methods are valuable helps and should be employed to the fullest degree, but if I "have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

Devotional Period

THEME. A Child Is Born.

CALL TO WORSHIP.

HYMN. "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night."

SCRIPTURE. Luke 2: 8-15.

PRAYER. Gratitude for God's greatest Gift who stands as our Great Teacher. Prayer that each one may know the true spirit of the Christmas message and may feel his faith and hope strengthened in the midst of difficult times. Prayer for peace on earth and for wisdom to know how each one can help to bring it about.

HYMN. "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

MEDITATION. Although the world seems dark in this Christmas month, the spirit of Christmas is not dead. It was to a very dark world that the Child came, a symbol of hope, nearly two thousand years ago. To men in that world he brought a new vision of brotherhood, a new way of love to rule in their hearts until it should spread from them throughout the world. It has been carried far and wide in fair weather and through storms. Today a storm of such intensity is upon us, that some of us may wonder if we can survive. Yet once again at Christmas the Christ child comes seeking admission. The darkness cannot put out his light. Let us kindle ours anew and go on with renewed faith to find and use every available means, both tried and untried, to spread his message to "teach all nations."

HYMN. "Joy to the World."

DISCUSSION

"Improving Our Teaching"

The World's Greatest Teacher Shows the Way

1. It is said of Jesus that He grew (Luke 2: 52). The measure of a man's leadership and influence is the measure of his constant growth. Growth takes place as one opens his mind to the enriching forces of life from outside himself—the Scriptures, good books and magazines, fellowship and communion with God. His powers are sharpened and increased as he uses them.

2. Jesus understood men that he might help them. Before beginning the preparation for each session it might be helpful for the teacher to read again Luke 6: 39-49 to be reminded of His complete and sympathetic understanding.

3. Jesus saw beneath an ugly exterior the value of the person within—the possibilities of beauty and usefulness in the unpolished stone. The woman who was a sinner, the publican, Mary Magdalene and a host of others were set on new paths because of his confidence and faith in them.

Marks of an Effective Teacher

1. An effective teacher manifests a wider interest than just his duty to his class.

a) His love for the total program of the church is evident.

b) He keeps in touch with and knows the functions of the church.

c) He knows and uses the best books and magazines in the field of his work as a teacher.

d) He knows the program of the Baptist Church School Advance and actively tries to promote it.

2. He prepares carefully for his teaching.

a) By reading through the entire unit before making a plan for the first session.

b) By studying the aim for the unit and working out very specific goals and plans for each session with the larger aim in view.

c) By spending time in meditation and prayer for guidance in leading the boys and girls to these goals.

3. He uses the best methods he can discover and keeps always in mind the fact that pupils learn most thoroughly by doing, not by listening alone.

Questions To Consider

1. Does the attendance in your class indicate that the pupils think it is worthwhile? The attitude of those who come?

2. Are there some possible ways of improving the situation?

a) Is the meeting-place adequate and as comfortable as it can be made?

b) Is the room clean, well ventilated and attractive?

c) Are the supplies in good repair?

d) Are you using the lesson materials best adapted to your group?

e) Does the group feel that you are prepared or that you have hurriedly read through the lesson and have no resources upon which to draw?

f) Do you vary the methods so that the class does not become monotonous?

g) Are you sincere and clear in your own mind about what you are trying to teach?

h) Do you begin the session promptly and close on time?

Discussion leaders and teachers alike will find helpful the little book called *Ways of Teaching,* by James P. Berkeley. See also the article on pages 8 and 9 of this issue of BAPTIST LEADER, "Effective Teaching in the Church School," by Gaines S. Dobbins.

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IT WAS an open Bible for all that gave new faith, new courage and new enthusiasm to a lost and dying world. To Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox and Melanchthon it was the center of everything. They preached it wherever men would gather; they taught it wherever students would listen; they printed it in whole and in part in the common tongue for everyone who cared to read it; they quoted it in books, tracts and sermons. —*Wesley G. Huber.*

The Christian Pastor

By GENE EBERT BARTLETT

PROBLEM

To what extent may the preacher use personal pastoral experiences to illustrate his sermons?

Mrs. Harmer nervously fingered her handbag as she waited in the familiar sanctuary for the prelude to begin. It was symbolic, she thought, that she should arrive early on this Sunday. For some weeks her problem had been pressing upon her. Over the weeks her confidence in her pastor had so increased that today she had made up her mind to seek his counsel.

The service proceeded according to the usual order. Yet to Mrs. Harmer it seemed a special service.

Soon the pastor was preaching. Now, she did not know it, but she was on the pastor's mind that morning. He had learned indirectly of her problem. Yet he knew that she must come to him voluntarily. So today, with her in mind, he attempted to show in the course of his sermon that others had found help in similar situations. Twice he illustrated his points by disguised pastoral experiences. Of course, he mentioned no names, but unfortunately one story was not disguised enough. Mrs. Harmer suddenly found herself deeply disturbed as she realized that she knew the one of whom the pastor spoke.

When the service was over, Mrs. Harmer shook hands with her pastor at the door and thanked him for the sermon. But she did not ask for an appointment. Now she felt that she could not run the risk of having her personal experiences, even in disguise, brought into some future sermon.

Here is a delicate point for the pastor to consider. To be sure, he wants his preaching to "come from life." He wants it personal and filled with human interest. On the other hand, he wants to build up confidence so that folk needing special, friendly counsel may know that others have found it in their pastor.

But, facing all the facts, one is convinced that it is a great mistake and a breach of confidence for a preacher to use special pastoral experiences in his sermons. In the long run, it does not build up confidence but destroys it. No disguise, however adept, is sufficient for the person naturally sensitive about an individual problem.

In the difficult task of creating a strong pastoral relationship, here is an excellent beginning point: Let confidence grow by what people tell their friends about our help—not by what we ourselves tell others!

PIONEER

Within recent weeks we have been learning from several sources of the creative idea worked out by Dr. L. L. Dunnington of the Endion Community Methodist Church, Duluth, Minn. This pastor has found a way to help his people tap the resources of prayer. Briefly, this is the story:

Two years ago Dr. Dunnington announced a six-months series of sermons dealing with common "life situations." The unique feature was that, after each sermon, brief printed cards would be given to each member of the congregation. On the card each week would be a prayerful affirmation to be used daily as a way of facing the problem discussed by the sermon. The instructions with the card read: "Carry this card with you for a week. Read it slowly and imaginatively a dozen times a day until the affirmations have sunk deep into the unconscious mind where God will use them to heal and integrate body, mind, and affairs."

In a recent article in *The Pulpit*, Dr. Dunnington explains the need to which his experiment was directed. He says, "For a number of years I had been increasingly conscious of the ineffectiveness of my ministry. Helpful though the church services might be, they evidently were not enough. Tense, fearful, and unhappy over the insecurity and meaninglessness of this topsy-turvy world, my people were not getting the help they needed. They would agree with their minister as to the need for a closer walk with God through prayer, but they didn't do much praying. . . . . God didn't have a chance."

So the search for some definite suggestions as to ways of acting upon the sermon led to this plan. The result? Dr. Dunnington says that the discovery of this simple technique has changed his whole ministry. The renewed life of the church, and the inquiries from all over the nation form indisputable testimony that the method has struck a real need.

The response to this really very simple procedure is another evidence that we *must* wake up to the need to give people "something definite" to which they can hold. The amazing growth of the cults which, in spite of bewildering and often ridiculous philosophies, still give thousands a feeling of practical help makes us realize the urgency of this need. In the long overdue awakening, the work of Dr. Dunnington stands out as a significant sign. His method will suggest similar procedures to other pastors.

PREACHER

Dr. Frank M. Swaffield, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, New Haven, Conn., recently preached a timely sermon on the subject, "I Still Believe in the Church." We quote:

"Paul's favorite name for the church was 'the body of Christ,' because the church seemed to him a great organism through which the mind and spirit of Christ could be expressed much the same as the human body is the instrument of the soul's expression. Therefore, it was a holy thing.

"In the four gospels, as any reader of the New Testament may easily discover, the church is named three times, but the Kingdom is mentioned more than six score times. In the epistles the ratio is reversed. There the Kingdom fades out considerably and the church looms large. Ian MacLaren thought this was a sad relapse on the part of the Apostle Paul. . . . . But in order to realize an ideal you must make a beginning somewhere. The Kingdom of Heaven means the entire organism of society permeated with the spirit of Jesus Christ. But how are you going to effect that result unless you have some definite and practical instrument to work with? Therefore, Jesus founded the church, and it is the divine organ for bringing in the Kingdom.

"We must face the question honestly: Could we substitute some other organization for the church, and some other message for the gospel and be just as well off? Let no man becloud the issue with the noise of words; the church represents principles which, if not working successfully, should be. What charge can be laid against righteousness or peace? Whoever spoke against the slogan of 'liberty, equality, fraternity'? Yet the Christian principle is that old slogan purified and extended. Our most conquering and triumphant message is brotherliness. Let us not forget the purpose of the Christian church. . . . .

"We have seen the potentates put to flight by the dreamers, the prophets crushing the hero, the sweeping away of violence by thought. But the end is not yet. The torchbearers of progress have much to do. . . . . Is the church played out? Never! The whole history of the race has been one long demonstration of the fact that the only dynamic that is strong enough, constant enough, full enough, deep enough, powerful enough, eternal enough, is the power of religion to hold men to their tasks and give them joy and confidence as they face the cross that separates them from the Kingdom."

"Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas Tonight!"

H. Armstrong Roberts

In spite of the war clouds that darken the world today there are in every land those who honor the Prince of Peace. In the article below we are reminded of this Christian fellowship that remains unbroken.

By ELIZABETH S. WHITEHOUSE

CHRISTMAS is the most contagious thing in the world. Though every nation has its own unique way of celebrating the holy day, most of our Christmas customs are either borrowed from, or widely shared with Christian folk everywhere. In our own country are many foreign-born peoples who have brought to our shores their own wealth of Christmas customs with all the splendid traditions and rich pageantry that surround them. The Christmas tree, the Christmas feast, the customs connected with giftmaking, the candlelight, and the carols, the special hour of worship in our churches, all these, and many other Christmas joys are borrowed from other peoples who used them long before we did and whose lending has greatly enriched us.

This year when Christmas carries so much of sorrow and separation mingled with its joy, let everyone hold fast to all that Christians everywhere still share in common. If you are teaching children or youth, think with them of the Christian fellowship that remains unbroken throughout the world; for in every nation, yes, even in those nations we have come to think of as enemy countries, there yet remains that group of God's children who pray with us for the coming of the Prince of Peace. The materials which follow are to help you to realize that Christmas is not dead, but that in the world today, more than ever, it is a living vital thing that flames in the hearts of Christians everywhere.

Christmas in Armenia

Armenians celebrate Christmas on the sixth of January. To them, it is a holy day indeed, and it is preceded by a week of severe fasting. On the last day of that week holy communion is taken reverently and joyfully by every devout soul. On Christmas Eve choirboys chant their way through the village as they collect gifts of food that will be used for a communal Christmas breakfast.

Early in the morning, before the coming of the first light, church bells ring to summon the villagers to prayer. Carrying small lanterns through the dark streets the worshipers gather at the church. All the church vessels have been newly polished, and the fragrance of flowers and incense makes the air sweet. After church the villagers visit in one another's homes, where the old folks are treated with special honor. Gifts are exchanged and the needs of even the poorest are well cared for.

Christmas in Czechoslovakia

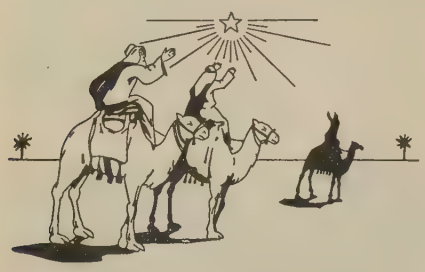
December sixth is the day which the children in this land have come to regard as their very own. Good Saint Mikulas, who is St. Nicholas himself, is supposed to slide down from heaven on a rope of gold, and to wander through the streets bringing gifts to all good children, and a switch for all naughty ones. Like our own children, the boys and girls of Czechoslovakia hang up their stockings, preferably outside the window, where the good saint cannot possibly miss them.

On December twenty-fourth all the family fast until evening, when the feast is spread—baked carp served with a rich sauce. The table is made lovely with dried fruits prettily arranged, and with bread baked in fancy shapes, and stuffed with raisins and nuts. After the feast the family gathers around a Christmas tree to play games. At midnight the family goes together to the church for a special service of worship and joyful singing. Evergreens fill the church with spicy fragrance, and always there is the the Christmas crib about which the children gather in delight after the service.

The Czech Christmas greeting is "*Veselé Vanoce*," "*Vanocka*" being the word for Christmas.

Christmas in Greece

On Christmas Eve carolers wander through the village singing from doorstep to doorstep. Roast pig is the equivalent of our turkey for the feast, and if any man is too poor to buy one for his family, his friends and neighbors will chip in and help. "*Kala Christogene!*" calls out a man to his friend, "Beautiful



Star of Bethlehem

By Alice Searles

Oh, Star that shone over Bethlehem
That night so long ago,
Shine tonight for the sorrowing ones
In lands of terror and woe.
Bring them comfort and bring them hope,
A promise of peace at last,
Teach them to trust and to look above
Until the dark night is past.
Star that shone over Bethlehem
That night so long ago,
Shine for a war-torn world tonight,
Because it needs you so.

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birth of Christ!" *"Eli Pola!"* "A long life to you!" On Christmas Day children, however grown up they may be, however far they may live from home, always try to come back to the old home to spend the happy day together. There is a Christmas loaf which is baked with special care and called the "Christ loaf." This is kept for sharing with strangers or newcomers in the village. Special courtesies are extended to the old folks; they are seated in the very best chairs as though on a throne, while the children, great and small, try to outdo one another in waiting upon them and surrounding them with every courtesy and respect.

Greece, being almost an island, is ever conscious of the sea. One of the oldest Christmas customs is the blessing of the waters. This takes place on January sixth at high noon. The Archbishop, in his most resplendent robes, leads the chanting villagers in a procession down to the shore and there offers a prayer for those at sea. Then the Archbishop blesses the waters. In Florida at Tarpon Springs there is a large Greek colony of sponge divers. Every year this ceremony of the blessing of the waters is carried out here just as it is done in Greece.

Christmas in Italy

Every Italian home that can afford it prepares a Christmas manger, and there every morning during the week before Christmas the family gathers for prayer. This beautiful custom is common, too, among Italians in America. The mangers are made just as beautiful as the family pocketbook will permit, and tiny candles light it when daylight is gone. Carolers dressed in costume go from house to house and play and sing before the mangers.

The Christmas feast has for its main dish a large eel called *capitone*, and artichoke with eggs is sure to be served. As in England, so in Italy a yule log is burned on Christmas Eve. Before it is lighted, every child in the family is blindfolded and is asked to recite from memory a verse of poetry for the Christ child. Then the blindfold is removed, and the child finds before him a heap of gifts which he supposes the Christ child has brought to him. Christmas Day is a holy day during which the people flock to the churches where the services held are most impressive. *"Buon Natale"* is the Christmas greeting among friends in Italy.

Christmas in Mexico

The children in the villages of Mexico look forward every year to seeing the "Posada," a miracle play. Each *posada* begins with worship, and ends with gayest festivity. The word *posada* means "inn" and the play represents Mary and Joseph searching for the inn in Bethlehem and a place to spend the night. At twilight the village children see the torchlight procession approaching the house which has been previously chosen for the *posada.* Leading the procession are those who will take the parts of Mary and Joseph. They carry small trays upon which are tiny wax figures representing the holy family. Mary and Joseph then beg admission at the house and are refused. After a parley they are at last admitted, and the procession, the watchers, and all enter to find an improvised altar upon which the figures of the holy family have been placed. Suddenly the prayers cease and the happy *piñata* song is heard. The doors of the house are thrown open; even the newest stranger is made welcome. Refreshments are passed and the *piñata,* a huge bag of gifts, is broken and the gifts are scattered to the joy of all who can reach them.

Another favorite miracle play is "Los Pastores," or the play of the shepherds. The method of celebrating Christmas with this play is much the same as the *posada.* January sixth is gift day for the children. Then, they will tell you that the three Wise Men come riding with their gifts. Before the door of each house stand rows of children's shoes stuffed with hay and perhaps a carrot or an apple for the Wise Men's camels. In the morning the hay is mysteriously gone and the shoes are stuffed with gifts.

Christmas in Poland

Though war has changed most things in Poland, as indeed it has in some of the other countries mentioned, the memories of the old-time Christmas celebration will ever be fresh. Always Christmas time has been a time of strange beauty to the Poles. On Christmas Eve comes the *"willia"* or Christmas feast. Fish or mushroom soup is the main dish, and there is a wonderful dessert made with noodles, honey, poppy seed, and fruit. Before the meal a special prayer is offered, and wafers stamped with Christmas symbols are passed about. These have been blessed by the church and everyone eagerly shares his wafer with everyone present, giving voice as he does so to his good wishes for the one who shares the wafer with him. No one begins to eat, however, until the first star appears in the sky. This is in memory of the Christmas star that led the Wise Men to the infant Saviour. If for any reason, an expected guest fails to appear, a passing stranger will be invited in. Even the farm animals are remembered and specially feasted on Christmas Eve in memory of the animals who were present at the birth of the Lord Jesus. Polish peasants like to think that on Christmas Eve on the stroke of midnight animals suddenly gain the power to speak and tell again the wonderful story of the first Christmas night.

The Christmas tree is to be found in every home, and gifts are given out to family and friends by the Good Star, who is represented by a woman dressed in white robe and veil. The children first kneel and whisper a Christmas prayer of thanks and sing their favorite carols before the Good Star distributes her gifts. At midnight the *"pasterka"* or "shepherds' service" is celebrated in Polish churches both in Europe and in our own land. The songs sung at this service have a very great joyousness and beauty. The church is never closed, day or night, until after the sixth of January, and during that time the good priest goes to every home and family and offers a special prayer and blessing there. When Poles would wish you a merry Christmas they say, *"Weselych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia."*

Christmas in Syria and Lebanon, the Holy Land

Have you ever wondered what Christmas is like in the land that gave us Christmas? In Syria the Christmas season begins on December 4 and lasts until January 6. On December 4, St. Barbara's Day, a table loaded down with sweets and all sorts of delicacies is prepared in every Syrian home, even in our own land. On that day the poor are specially remembered and help is freely and happily offered to all who need it.

In Syria the Christmas season is not

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Cy La Tour

Finding the Christmas Spirit *Through Stories*

By M. LOUISE C. HASTINGS

WHEN the call comes from our children, "Please tell us a story" are we ready to meet their demand? Storytelling has a great deal to contribute to the beauty and understanding of Christmas. With pictures of beautiful Madonnas and of the manger scene, with the building of the crèche, and with carefully chosen stories, let us emphasize the spiritual side of Christmas.

Did any of you ever ask a group of small children, "Whose birthday do we celebrate on Christmas?" and have nine out of ten respond, "Santa Claus's"? As parents and teachers we can make clear the fact that Christmas is the Christ child's birthday, and that Santa Claus is the spirit of Christmas that carries cheer from house to house.

There are beautiful legends built around the Christ child and around the many symbols of the Christmas season. It will take time to search for them, but it is time well spent. Libraries have compilations of Christmas stories. The best ones we can copy in a notebook kept from year to year for just this purpose. It is a good thing to own one anthology of Christmas stories, but all the good stories are not in one book.

One busy mother kept such a notebook. The stories copied were long ones, it is true, and it took valuable time to copy them. One was found in this book and one in that, but at last a choice anthology was assembled. There are also many stories in the Sunday school papers and in children's magazines which are well worth cutting out and keeping in such a book.

A thoughtful mother planned seven regular stories to be read the week before Christmas, one each night at bedtime. There were other Christmas stories read and told, but these seven stories were used year after year and the children loved them. They belonged to their Christmas tradition just as much as did the yearly use of the tree decorations or the hanging of their stockings by the fireplace each Christmas Eve.

When the children themselves are able to read, it is a happy idea to fasten up on a screen some simple Christmas stories, along with pictures of the nativity scene. It is always well to give children opportunity to absorb beautiful things by themselves, in their own way.

As the children advance in years the stories necessarily will be longer. Very little children should not have too long stories.

Raymond M. Alden's "Why the Chimes Rang" should be a part of every child's heritage, also Kate Douglas Wiggin's "Christmas Carol." Each year during the Christmas season, let us read some of the great Christmas stories such as Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," the Christmas stories in Irving's *Sketch Book*, the chapter called "Mystic Tones" in *Syrian Christ*, by Abraham M. Rihbany, and the meeting of the Wise Men so exquisitely given in the beginning chapters of *Ben Hur*. Adults need to get the spirit of Christmas through stories as well as the children.

Where is Christmas in the world today? Where is the spirit of good will to be found? Look for it in every home. We parents must exert ourselves more than ever to make the home a center of Christmas cheer. Stories play their part in creating this atmosphere.

"Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas Tonight!"

(Concluded from page 20)

the gay holiday most of us know; rather it is a time for prayer and worship. The roads are crowded with eager pilgrims on their way to Bethlehem to attend the midnight service there. Christmas Day itself is observed very quietly at home, but New Year's Day is a time for great merriment. On that day presents are exchanged, and children run from door to door with merry greetings and are showered with gifts of candy or even money. Santa Claus is unknown to the children of Syria, but dear to their hearts is the camel of the third Wise Man, the camel, so legend says, which was too young and too tired to complete that first journey and now is gift bearer to all the children of the land. The Christian Syrian child does not exist who would go to bed on New Year's Eve without first setting out a bowl of water and a handful of grain for the thirsty, tired, gift bearer.

On Christmas morning the daughters of the family who go to the fountain for the day's supply of water will take along a handful of wheat to cast reverently into the water. "Good morning, Fountain! On this holy day, bless and increase our grain!" In that land which first knew the Christ, men will tell you that the very trees bow in adoration on Christmas Eve before the Christ child. According to a dearly loved legend, wild beasts on the holy night are supposed to stay in their dens, and all are for that one night, as harmless as pets. There is an old Syrian tradition that says on the night of Epiphany, January 6, commemorating the baptism of Jesus, the gates of heaven are flung open and wishes and prayers uttered at that moment are sure to be fulfilled.

■

SING the glory of God and of good will to man!

—WHITTIER, "A Christmas Carmen"

They Worship While They Work

By NELLIE M. WAGAR

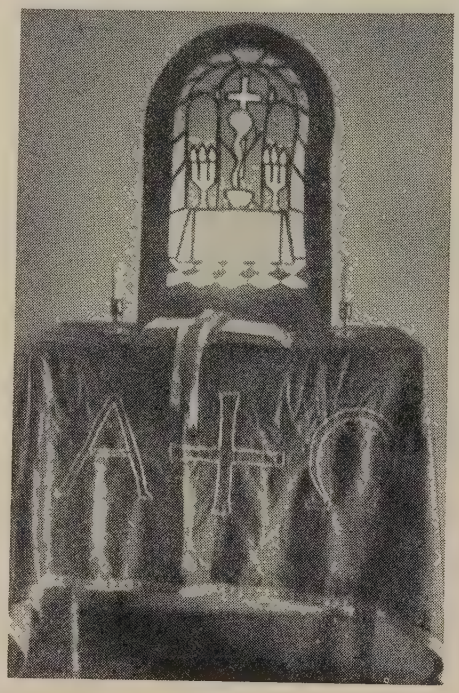
DESIGNING and constructing imitation stained-glass windows is one type of art work that can be done as well in church school as in the public schools. Any artistic production that is good must represent feeling and ideas and the sensitivity of the artist to the relationships of facts as he sees them. The public school art teacher, no matter how religious, is hardly in a position to guide the religious thinking of the students to the point of expressing those ideas symbolically. The church school teacher has the more important task of guiding students to think about the ideas involved in all of their relationships and importance. She can even guide them to paint or construct with the purpose of leading others to worship.

Some people who use art work in churches have thought that if children drew a picture of a fishing net they would remember that Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men," and thus have a better religious education. If children drew an ark, they would remember how Noah served God, or perhaps how God punished wicked people. Anyone who thinks seriously about how children learn, however, will realize that they will not remember the stories because they drew pictures, and even less will they understand the great significance of the stories. But art work which represents long hours of group discussions, worship, picture study, co-operative planning, interviews, and tours, is a technique for religious education that bears good fruit.

Regardless of the medium used in the actual making of the window, the discussions and accompanying learnings will be much the same. There are always certain steps, namely, motivation, study of ideas desired for window, study of other windows and their meanings, selection of symbols, planning and designing, execution of plans.

Motivation

One group of juniors had been studying the Hebrew feast days and their methods of sacrifices. This brought them to notice much more carefully their own worship and its symbols. The leader helped them to discover the use of symbols in stained-glass windows which Christians have used to promote worship. When the desire for making a window was aroused, what could be more natural than to depict in that window the symbols of Hebrew and Christian worship? Another junior group knew little about worship, and a new leader took them over during church hour on Sunday mornings. She told them several stories



A WINDOW MADE OF COLORED CELLOPHANE

of other children worshiping, and discussed with them what happened when they worshiped. They toured the building and learned much about their own church and its many functions. Various committees arranged pictures, flowers, offering plates, Bible, and small crosses to make worship centers for their own junior room. They decided to use some colored tissue from the Christmas gift wrappings to make some lovely window designs directly on the clear-glass windowpanes.

Another group decided to make a large three-panel or triptych window to stand in the front of their room. They decided to buy a good picture of Christ for the central window and then they began to design the rest of the total pattern. More of this story will be told later in this article. See the picture page for the development of the window.

Selecting Medium

The type of materials to be used depends on the use to be made of the window when finished. If the group wishes to cover the actual glass in the window of the room, then a transparent material must be used. Colored tissue paper, such as that used for wrapping Christmas presents, with any ordinary black art paper for the lead lines will answer. Surely no one will use envelope lining in helter-skelter fashion as is often done in decorating a glass bottle in a vacation school! The tissue paper is cut to make the patterns that are planned for the window. Colored cellophane paper gives equally good light, but may be increasingly difficult to get in wartimes. Or the window may be made on Manila paper with enamel paint and linseed oil and then put into place by means of small molding around the edges. Some lovely permanent windows have been made by this method.

If a window is wanted for the front of the room as a worship center, electric lights may be used behind it to make it more effective. If transparency is not wanted, the opaque, colored, glazed Christmas wrapping paper may be cut into the desired patterns and pasted onto a hard surface made of grocery store carton material, beaverboard, or other substance. If the window is to stand on the floor, a frame of wood, at least one inch by two inches, should give support to the window. Heavy bristol or art board will give enough support for those standing on tables.

Of course, the leader must take into consideration the age of the children or youth, and their ability to handle details. Care must be used in guiding the groups so that they will not choose such a difficult task that they will grow weary of it before finishing. The group must decide where they want their window, and how they will use it when it is completed. Whatever medium they use, they must expect to make narrow, imitation lead lines to separate all the sections of the picture. These are made from either black strips of paper or are painted on with India ink.

Making Designs

If an examination of other stained-glass windows has not taken place in the motivation, then the group will want to make such a study before making their own designs. The teacher will make use of books on church symbolism to help interpret the many kinds of windows which they find. Before any designs are planned, the entire department should participate in a discussion of the meanings they wish to express in their window.

After the ideas have been agreed on, they may use the next session to discuss symbols that express these ideas. Do they want to show what Christ can do for the world today? They will need new symbols expressing life today. One

(Please turn to page 24)

Making STAINED-GLASS *Windows*

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2

PLANNED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY LLIE M. WAGAR

4

THIS IS HOW WE DID IT

1. IN A UNIT ABOUT THE CHURCH, JUNIORS STUDY THE WINDOWS AND THEIR SYMBOLS.
2. THEY DECIDE TO MAKE A WINDOW FOR THEIR ROOM, AND CHOOSE A PICTURE TO USE IN ITS CENTER.
3. ENTIRE GROUP SKETCH VARIOUS DESIGNS AND VOTE ON SYMBOLS TO USE.
4. BOYS COME ON SATURDAY TO SAW THE PANELS FROM BEAVERBOARD.
5. THE JUNIORS USE THEIR PATTERNS TO CUT OUT SYMBOLS AND DESIGNS.
6. WORKING FROM THE CENTER DESIGNS SOME PASTE AND OTHERS CUT UNTIL THE WINDOW IS COMPLETED.

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6

group wanted to show Christ in the home, church school, recreation, and culture. They chose the child at Mother's knee for the home, a red schoolhouse as a symbol of our many types of schoolhouses, a little New England white country church, a tennis racket for recreation, and an artist's palette for culture. Another group wished to show Christ loving all the children of the world. They grouped the children of all nationalities around him, somewhat similar to Copping's picture, "The Hope of the World." Others decided that figures of people were too difficult to draw well and that their window, even though their own, must be a thing of beauty. They found silhouette pictures of children of various nationalities, and arranged these people, looking upward toward a cross, showing only their back to the worshiper. Others said, "We can't draw people at all. Let's just put the cross and the words below it, 'Jesus loves everyone.'"

When the designs have been decided upon, one or more sessions may be used for constructing with crayon or chalk a paper model of the finished product. It is not enough to sketch or even draw firmly the lines of the picture. If colors are only planned and not filled in, often the children, and sometimes the teacher, will overlook places where certain colors will clash or neutralize each other as they meet. When the model is completely made with colors as they wish to make them in the real window, they can analyze their picture and make changes that enhance the beauty and meaning of the picture. In the project illustrated on the picture page, the children did not finish their model, but chose their colors and the diamond or triangle forms. Because the committees for the different panels disagreed, one finds triangles in one and diamonds in another. The leader did not attempt to direct them toward agreement. When the picture was finished, however, they saw that the equal amount of the three colors, maroon, green, and gold did not give as fine an effect as if small amounts of one color had been used to contrast with the others. They discovered the large amount of diamonds and triangles were "too checkered for our eyes." Their good self-criticism should have come after making a model instead of after finishing the real thing.

Details of Processes

1. *Colored tissue paper.* This type may be used either on the window with no other background, or it may be placed in a frame of heavier material and then placed upright on a table. The leaded lines may be cut out of lightweight black paper about one-fourth or three-eighths-inch wide and pasted over all the seams where two colors meet or where a natural division takes place in the subject being depicted. Black lines are often used to make the outlines of the subject more clear, even though no change of color is made. If the new window is being made on the windowpane, black lines should be placed on both sides of the same so that the window looks as finished and complete from the outside as from the inside. Be certain that the black lines on the two sides of the picture match evenly all along or there will be a blur from the wrong side coming through to spoil the effect.

2. *Cellophane.* Draw the exact pattern decided upon by the group on heavy bristol or art board and paint double lines for leading about three-eighths inch with black India ink or other good black paint. Then cut on all lines with safety razor (use old ones with only one sharp edge), leaving only the leaded lines. Cut out pieces of cellophane three-eighths inch wider on all sides than the pattern made. This allows space to glue them on the back of the art-board leaded lines, which will give them support. When all the pieces of cellophane have been cut out and pasted on, a piece of thin white tissue paper may be pasted over the entire back of the picture, putting the glue only around the outside edges of the total picture. This white paper diffuses the electric light that may be placed behind the window to give it full significance of pattern and color.

3. *Colored paper.* The glazed colored paper that can be bought as Christmas wrapping paper in any gift shop or the poster paper sold in school-supply houses can be easily pasted on any light wood or heavy cardboard surface by older primaries and juniors. Pasting the long black strips as lead lines over the cracks where the colored pieces come together is a task for the older hands of more skilled children.

4. *Enamel and linseed oil.* This is the method described by John Morgan in the book listed below. It is used for all the better and more permanent windows. The oil, when mixed with enamel paint, makes a transparent color when painted on ordinary cream or Manila paper. India ink is used for making the lead lines before the other paint is put on as these lines prevent the oiled paint from spreading. If using this process, Mr. Morgan's inexpensive booklet should be used instead of depending solely upon experimentation. His fine pictures of results in many churches are also splendid motivation for any group. This type of window probably should not be attempted by juniors.

Dedication of Window

The significance of the project is materially heightened for the group if they plan together a dedication service of the completed window. Not only the values which they wish to express in their window may be utilized, but the character learnings from the group process may be lifted into their spiritual significance and given permanency in the feelings of the group because of their emotional associations.

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TRIPTYCH WINDOW PAINTED WITH ENAMEL AND LINSEED OIL

Christmas Activity

By REBECCA RICE

OF all times of year when religion may be taught in terms of activity, Christmas heads the list. There are countless worth-while activities from which to choose, and we must choose wisely. The little givers of Christmas cheer are receiving more benefit from participating in giving than those who receive. It is with them as much as with the recipients that we must concern ourselves. It is all right to ask the children to bring money to buy a doll for a little girl who has none and who wants one more than anything in the world, if the matter is followed up by the children. It is better to tell the story and leave the ending for them to complete. The story might run as follows:

"For days Alice had been watching the toyshop window. In it were drums and teddy bears; there were books and a fine electric train, but she did not care for them. In the middle of the window was a doll carriage and in the carriage was a baby doll. Such a doll! She looked like a real, live baby nestled down under a pink comforter. Her eyes were shut, but Alice knew that they were blue eyes. She knew that under that pink comforter was a dainty white dress, and that under the dress were the cunningest little flat-iron feet with soft woolly socks on them.

"'Oh, Mother,' she said, 'if I could only have that doll to be my own baby.'

"'She costs two dollars and a half,' said her mother sadly. 'I cannot afford it.'

"Every morning Alice looked into the window, and every morning she blew a kiss to the precious baby in the carriage. One morning she was not there."

At this point the storyteller stops, a most aggravating stop, for the class is very anxious to hear what happened next.

"Go on," someone may say, almost impatiently.

"I don't know how to finish it," says the storyteller. "How would you like it to end?"

In the conversation that follows the point may be brought out that there are many little girls who long for a doll. Someone is almost sure to suggest getting one. Pennies, nickels, and dimes will be brought and enough money will be put into this special offering with which to buy a doll. Conversation should keep the matter in mind for several weeks. The children should tell what kinds of dolls they would like best. When the money has been collected, two little girls should be chosen to go shopping with the teacher to select the doll. If possible other children should be chosen to help carry it to its destination. If a written note of thanks is received the class should see it and handle it. They should have it inserted in their classbook.

Every year at Christmas time there is a party for the children of the church. Always there is a tree. This year one of the classes in the Primary Department strung yards of popcorn festoon as part of the decoration for this tree.

The same class planned a Christmas for a needy family. The entire class saved money for several weeks, and just before Christmas went shopping. The Saturday before Christmas they were invited to their teacher's house to decorate a basket and wrap up bundles. Their gifts were presented at the white-gift service. I wish you might have seen the happiness on the faces of the girls who brought their gift to the manger. It was truly their gift, for they had planned and executed all of it.

One class of second-grade boys sent two magazines to an elderly shut-in. The day before Christmas their teacher took them to her house to present them and to sing Christmas carols to her. She was much pleased and a pleasant attitude toward old age and helplessness was established for the boys.

The first-year class brought toys, money, and clothing for the day nursery. On the Sunday before Christmas they took their gifts to the nursery. As it was Sunday most of the children were home, but there were a few there whose mothers were in the hospital. They saw three little mites having their supper at a little round table. The oldest must have been about three and the youngest was barely able to manage a spoon. They appealed greatly to our children.

There are many things children can do for others at Christmas, and there are things they can do at home. Place cards may be made for the Christmas dinner. The children in the older classes can draw and color attractive little pictures in one corner of the cards. The little ones can cut out squares three inches long and fold them in the middle to make them stand. Christmas seals may be pasted on these for decoration. If these are made of colored construction paper, they are very pretty and really suitable for use. The child feels that he is contributing to the success of the Christmas dinner.

The children can also fold and paste paper cups for nuts or candy, and they may make attractive tags to put on their presents. Blotters and calendars are not too hard for little hands to make. If there is a small child in the family they can make a scrapbook for him.

There is much that can be done in the church school at Christmas. First, the room must be decorated. This requires careful planning. In our church we decided to put our lovely Margaret Tarrant Christmas picture directly in back of the glass-top table that stood in front of the double semicircle of chairs. Candles were put on the table. The boys arranged on the table a background of evergreen (lower limbs cut from Christmas trees and donated by an agreeable storekeeper).

During the presession period the Sunday before our Christmas service of worship, I brought an empty shoe box and the figures to form a small crèche. This fascinated the children and they had a beautiful time arranging it. We colored the outside of the box brown and lined it with paper roughly colored to resemble the inside of a barn. A window was cut in the back of this. The children put hay upon the floor and took turns arranging the figures. The boy who got the best results was allowed to arrange it on the table beneath the Margaret Tarrant picture. The green branches made a most attractive setting and candles were put on the table to light it.

We have two new burlap screens. The boys helped me to arrange these, one on either side of the table, and Oscar, who is very fond of pictures, helped to sort and choose the ones that were especially good for Christmas. Two boys arranged them attractively on the screens.

As soon as the room was decorated the room was full of children and it was time to begin. Next came more planning. What should we do the Sunday before Christmas? Lawrence, who loves stories, suggested that I tell stories. "Tell *two* stories," he said.

"But what are *you* going to do?" I asked.

After some prodding someone suggested that they could sing. A list of the Christmas songs that the children had been practicing was mentioned and these were then sung.

In all these activities the children plan what they want to do and then work out their own plans. The results are put into the classbook. A study of these class records shows what has been done in class and in the presession period, and by studying these, a teacher or superintendent can judge the value of the activity.

H. Armstrong Roberts

December in the Nursery Class

By BESS V. NESTER

THE nursery teachers were talking of what happened in a recent Mothers' Club meeting. One of the mothers had contended that it was wrong to teach a child that there is a Santa Claus. A very spirited discussion had followed and they were still divided upon the question when the meeting adjourned.

"It seems to me," said the superintendent, "that the question itself is not so important as the decision they finally make that the child should not be confused by meeting different 'Santa Clauses' in stores and on street corners during the Christmas season and by being made to believe in their promises." It was suggested that the child might see and handle a Santa Claus false face and have explained to him that these Santas were men just like Daddy, dressed up to look like Santa Claus.

The superintendent continued, "Whether the child is taught that there is a Santa Claus or not, is not so important as teaching him that he has a Friend called Jesus and that we have Christmas because of him." And so they planned how they could help the parents to celebrate Christmas in the homes as Jesus' birthday, and how they could guide the children in the nursery class to appreciate Jesus as their Friend, and to associate Christmas and the happy times it brings with his birthday. A little booklet was made for the use of parents. In this were lists of hymns, scripture verses and prayers which could be used in family devotions, stories to tell, games to play, directions for making window silhouettes and a crèche or manger scene; lists of suitable toys for the younger child, and stories of observances of Christmas in other lands.

In preparing for the Christmas season each group of workers will make plans to suit their own situation. The aims and procedures will be about the same, but materials, decorations, and projects will vary according to the size of the group, the location of the class and the facilities of the church. If a tree is used, it should be small enough for the children to decorate and the decorations should be of the kind that is safe as well as easy for them to handle. Some may plan to have a crèche, or manger scene. The little figures for this may be purchased at the ten-cent store, a few at a time, with new ones added each year until the scene is complete. These figures should be placed on a low table where the children can handle and help arrange them.

Many churches provide treats for the children at Christmas time. These are best given at a party during the week rather than on Sunday when the aim is to center every person's thoughts on Jesus. When treats are given, the nursery teachers should ask for simple toys or inexpensive picture-books instead of the proverbial Christmas candy that never should be given to such young children. If a party is given, invitations may be sent home by the children the Sunday before, written on a bell or a Christmas tree cut from construction paper. Mothers may be entertained in a separate room or they may spend the time in shopping. They usually appreciate the latter. Familiar games may be played, the tree trimmed, and simple refreshments, such as homemade cookies or ice cream, served.

The plans for the four Sunday sessions may be something like the following:

First Sunday

Little children often think of Jesus as being a baby now. This may be avoided by telling them about Jesus as a grown-up Friend before talking about him when he was a baby. Procedures for such a session may be found in the March, 1942, issue of this magazine. See plans given for the Second or Third Sundays. Use the story, "Jesus Loving Little Children," McCallum, or "Some Children Went To See Jesus," from *I Wonder*.

Second Sunday

The crèche and the pictures of "The Holy Night" and "Christ Blessing Little Children," may be ready for this Sunday. The pictures are from the Picture Set. Let the children investigate the crèche at will; talk with them about the different figures. The story, "When Jesus Was a Baby," may be told over and over as the children are interested. This story should be made the teacher's own so that it is told naturally and in a conversational manner. Examine the pictures. The teacher may sing "Away in a Manger" after they have talked about the Holy Night scene. Suggest they tell God that they are glad for Jesus.

They may take a trip to the nursery room to see the babies. Explain that Jesus must have looked much like them when he was a baby. Talk about birthdays and how each one was a wee baby on his first birthday and how they are growing tall and are bigger each birthday.

Talk of birthday gifts and of how happy it makes us to give them and of how that is the reason we like to make gifts on Jesus' birthday. Show them materials for making gifts and let them choose what they want to make for Mother or Father or Brother or Sister. With help they can make such simple gifts as a blotter decorated with Christmas seals, note pads with bright paper covers and tied with ribbon or cord, small calendar pads pasted on construction paper decorated with a seal, or pictures mounted on cardboard and tied with a cord for hanging. They may sing, "We have a happy time, a happy time in play.

(Please turn to page 30)

DECEMBER

In the Beginner Department

By ESTHER FREIVOGEL

THE four Sundays of December are devoted to an interpretation and observance of Christmas. Whether you are using the first- or the second-year part of the course, you will devote the first three Sundays to such a careful use of materials and an interpretation of experiences that Christmas will mean to your children far more than "Santa Claus and the getting of presents." It will be a day that has spiritual values for them because it is the celebration of the birth of Jesus "who went about doing good."

What Is Christmas?

For too many children Christmas is merely "the time when Santa Claus comes" or "the time when we get a lot of new toys." To this church school teachers and many parents add the thought that Christmas is the day on which "the baby Jesus was born." Seldom is any connection made between this thought and the various celebrations of the day. Neither is "the baby Jesus" connected with Jesus, the man, whom the children have come to know and love.

Let us discover how these various thoughts and celebrations can be integrated and made to serve one significant purpose. If children are to think of Christmas as the birthday of Jesus, then we must help them to recall at the beginning of the Christmas unit some of the kind and loving things that Jesus did as a man. Perhaps the children already have spoken of the coming of Christmas and have anticipated some of the happy experiences they will have. "Why do we plan happy times at Christmas? Why do people give presents? Why do we play Santa Claus and try to make others happy?" may be asked. Then will follow the important answer, "Because Christmas is Jesus' birthday. . . . . You have happy times on your birthday. Because people love Jesus, they want everyone to be happy on his birthday." If stories of Jesus' kindness and love have been recalled, then the wonderful birth stories will take their rightful place. "Jesus was such a wonderful man, wonderful things must have happened when he was born." Children will not express this thought in so many words, but they will sense it if the teaching procedure has been right.

What Shall We Give at Christmas?

In many communities five-year-old children attend daily kindergartens. There they make Christmas presents for their parents. At church school they also make presents for Mother and Father. Often they must make the very same gifts because the beginner teacher has made no provisions for choice. This seems a waste of precious time. Let us see what are the various possibilities in Beginner Departments where many children attend weekday kindergartens:

1. While an assistant teacher guides the younger children in making gifts for parents, the older ones may make gifts for other members of the family.

2. The older boys and girls may work together on a surprise gift for some other children. This may be the filling of a large stocking for the children of one family, for those in their own nursery class, or for children of a weekday nursery school or orphanage. Into such a stocking may be put small dolls, crayons, balls, and small trucks, purchased with the children's own money, and picture-books about Jesus, made from extra copies of pupils' leaflets.

3. Christmas cards may be made to say to sick people in a hospital, "This is Jesus' birthday. We hope it will be a happy day for you." Suitable pictures will be found on old Christmas cards. When delivering the children's cards, suggest that they be placed on the patients' trays on Christmas morning.

4. The making of materials to be used in a Christmas worship center in the home is another activity in keeping with our purpose for this season. If the child presses a candle carefully into a clay ball that he has flattened on one side, his family will have a candle to light on Christmas Eve or on the evening of Jesus' birthday. When the clay holders are dry, the children may paint them. A nativity picture, mounted on a standard of heavy construction paper, may form another part of the worship center. An attractive folder, made by the teachers, containing the Bible verses of the Christmas unit and suggestions as to ways of using the things made by the children, should accompany these gifts to the home.

Suggestive Outline of Sessions

First Sunday. Through the use of pictures, recall stories and songs telling of Jesus going about doing good. Have conversation about the plans for Christmas being made in the home. Think and talk about this question: "What is Christmas?" Tell the story of the birth of Jesus. Sing a Christmas song with which the children are to become familiar during these weeks. Plan and begin work on Christmas surprises to be given to others.

Second Sunday. Begin or continue work on gifts. As the children work, talk about their birthdays and how they celebrate them. Have them recall why they are making these gifts. Sing familiar Christmas songs, and the new one introduced in the first session. When gathered together in a group, look at the results of the morning's work. Recall again why they are making gifts. Turn attention to the nativity picture, recall story, light a candle for Jesus' birthday, sing Christmas songs. Tell another story about the birth of Jesus.

Third Sunday. While the group completes and wraps gifts, sing Christmas songs. Those who have completed gifts may look at picture story-books about Jesus, particularly those telling of his birth. Gather in a group around nativity pictures and a single lighted candle to listen to Christmas music, sing songs, recall birth stories, and perhaps play "going to Bethlehem to see Jesus in the manger." If the story of the Wise Men bringing gifts has not been used, it may be told. Join in a prayer thanking God for Jesus and expressing the hope that the children's gifts will bring joy to others on his birthday.

Fourth Sunday. Parents should be informed by letter of your desire to have the children bring Christmas toys on this Sunday. Make clear in the letter the Christian purpose back of this request. If toys are not brought, drawings of the toys the children have received will help to initiate conversation about sharing possessions with others. Children may show in pantomime how they play with some of their toys; those watching should try to guess what the toys are. There should also be conversation about ways in which these toys can be shared with playmates. Prayer for God's help in doing this may follow.

Little Children Tell the Story of the Baby Jesus

By LOUISE S. LINDER

JUST after Thanksgiving a group of teachers in the Beginner Department met to discuss a problem. The twenty little folks in their department had been asked to have a part in the Christmas entertainment to be given by the entire church school. How could this part of the program be planned so that it would not only interest the adults and children in the audience, but also have real meaning to the children participating? It seemed to the teachers that this season was too full of rich Christian meaning for them to waste any of the church school time reciting jingles or practicing drills or pantomimes. Therefore they tried to plan so that the regular lessons would evolve into a program for the Christmas entertainment. A description of the procedure they followed for three Sundays is given.

An inexpensive cardboard crèche was purchased, and before the children arrived on the first Sunday of December, the stable was set up. The figures were not in evidence. The children soon discovered the stable and began to talk about it. The leader joined in the conversation, and the children gathered around her to listen as she told the story of Mary and Joseph coming to the inn and of the birth of the baby Jesus. At the conclusion she brought out the figures of the animals in the stable, the donkey, Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. Retelling the story, she asked various children to come to the crèche and place the figures in the stable. When all were in place, she sang softly:

"The little baby Jesus is asleep.
If you tiptoe very softly you may peep.
You will see him on the hay
On this happy, happy day.
Hush—he's asleep."[1]

The children listened attentively. "Tommy, would you like to peep at the baby? Tiptoe very softly," the leader suggested. Tommy was delighted and came softly to the crèche to look in. The pianist joined the leader as she sang the song again. Other children came with radiant faces to peep until each had had a turn. By this time they were all singing as each went forward.

The rest of the morning's program followed the suggestions in the quarterly. The children had had their first rehearsal.

On the second Sunday the same procedure was followed, and the shepherds and sheep were added as that part of the story was told. The leader tried the experiment of telling the story in the words of the second chapter of Luke and found that it was quite understandable to the children. She held the open Bible in her hand even though she told it entirely from memory. As she retold the story and used questions and answers to bring out the story, a number of phrases became familiar, such as "Shepherds—keeping watch over their flocks by night," "Glory to God in the highest," and "The babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

The leader sang "Glory to God in the Highest,"[1] and the children soon caught the joyous, swinging melody and sang with her. Again they took turns tiptoeing to the manger scene to look at the baby. Since the second verse of "The Little Baby Jesus Is Asleep" concerned the shepherds, it was sung, too. Again the children had practiced the program.

On the third Sunday the story of the Wise Men was told in a similar manner. No new songs were sung, but the two by now familiar were sung, and again the children played their little game of which they never seemed to tire. The scripture story of the shepherds was reviewed. Many biblical phrases had been remembered by these small children.

Since the program was to be given on a week-night following this Sunday, certain instructions needed to be given. It was suggested to the children that on Thursday night they would have a chance to tell the story of Jesus to some of their friends. They were told that they would go into the big auditorium to tell the people the story of Christmas. A trip to the auditorium prepared them for this experience. They were made to feel that they had a message to give to others, rather than that they were going to show off something that they had learned. Notes were sent home with the children giving the time when the children were expected to be in their room on the night of the program.

The only preparation necessary on the platform before Thursday night was the arrangement of the stable part of the crèche on a low table. The open side of the crèche was turned toward the audience, and an electric light was placed where the roof would have been. This illuminated the interior of the stable so that the audience could see the figures. A low chair for the leader was placed near the table and near it on the floor a box of figures for the manger scene.

Thursday night came and a happy group of little children went into the auditorium. The program which they presented will long be remembered as a sincere and joyful presentation of the story of Christmas by little children who loved Jesus. The children went informally to the platform and were allowed to wave to their fathers and mothers whom they saw in the audience. Then the leader drew the attention of the children to the crèche and the group sat down facing the manger scene.

The children soon became engrossed in the story and in placing the figures in the stable as the story progressed. They completely forgot the people watching them as they helped to tell the story, sang "Glory to God" and gave Bible verses in the story. Finally the children tiptoed one by one to look reverently and lovingly at the pictured Baby as they sang together, "The Little Baby Jesus Is Asleep." The audience fell into a spirit of worship, and later several said that through this part of the program they experienced the true spirit of Christmas.

The informality of the program was proved by one little five-year-old girl who broke into the story with the unhappy words, "I haven't had a chance to put anybody into the picture!" The audience responded with a sympathetically soft laugh, that did not disturb the children, but proved that the audience was in the spirit of the story. The answer, "Yes, Jean, I know. I was just going to ask you to put this Wise Man into the picture," made Jean happy.

In looking back, the teachers felt that this had been a most worth-while Christmas project. The children were happy and satisfied; they had learned Christmas songs and verses that had real meaning to them, and at the same time the adults who witnessed the performance had a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure. Each individual child was called by name as he placed figures in the picture or contributed to the story, so that parents had the added satisfaction of seeing their child recognized. There was no hurry or confusion of a last-minute rehearsal; no tears or embarrassment over forgotten lines, and no stage fright. It was a celebration worthy of the Christ child.

[1] From *When the Little Child Wants To Sing.*

Loder

Primary Worship for December

Christmas Is a Happy Time

By MARY GRACE MARTIN

PERHAPS there is no other month of the year so eagerly anticipated by primary children as is December. It is a time when joy and gladness seem to vibrate within each child's soul and overflow to those about him. This year, with so much misery and suffering in the world, let us make sure that we help our children to experience the happiness that comes from thinking about others rather than self. Jesus, whose birthday we celebrate, is the supreme Example of one who knew such happiness. Therefore, through our worship this month we shall strive to help children not only to know and appreciate more fully the Christmas story, but also to catch some of the spirit of happiness of him whose birthday we celebrate.

Wherever possible, let the children share in bringing the Christmas atmosphere to the room through arranging the worship center, hanging greens, setting up a crèche and carrying out other activities that will bring experiences of happiness in themselves. The familiar Christmas carols seem to be the best loved, but make sure that the stanzas you use are within the understanding of primary children. Appropriate ones may be found in books such as *Primary Music and Worship* or *Worship and Conduct Songs*. Especially watch for times this month when informal worship may follow a study of a picture, a class story, an activity, or may arise spontaneously.

1. When We Celebrate Jesus' Birthday

PREPARATION. If you have a record of the birthdays of your pupils, prepare a birthday calendar or poster for December. Use a calendar with large numbers and on the proper dates write the names of children having birthdays this month. Write the word "Jesus" on the space for December twenty-fifth. Hang the poster in a conspicuous place, but do not use it with the worship center. Provide a collection of nativity pictures. These may be gathered from lesson leaflets, picture sets, Scripture calendars, greeting cards, and other sources. Mount the pictures attractively and place them on the browsing table for informal study. A madonna picture may well be used in the worship center today. A picture of children at a birthday party may help to stimulate conversation.

Allow a few minutes for the children to examine the nativity pictures about the room. Call the children together and talk about birthdays. Which ones of the group have birthdays during December? If you recognize the December birthdays now more time will be allowed in future sessions for activities. After this, remind the group that Jesus was not always a grown man. "Once he, too, was a baby, and as he grew he also had a birthday each year. Because we love him we like to celebrate his birthday and Christmas is the time we do this. Today we are going to think about his first birthday." Call attention to the picture at the worship center, and ask the children to think about the baby Jesus while the quiet music is played.

QUIET MUSIC. "Away in a Manger." If there is a victrola in the room, a record may provide the music and lend variety.

CONVERSATION. Talk about the nativity pictures which the children observed. Study one carefully. Discuss the care which a baby requires and which Mary lovingly gave to Jesus.

BIBLE STORY. The Birth of Jesus, Luke 2: 1-7.

SONG. "Away in a Manger."

LEADER. "It is a long, long time since Jesus was a baby, but we still like to remember him on his birthday. How do we often celebrate our birthdays?" (By parties, games, singing, special foods, gifts, and in other ways.)

STORY. "White Gifts for the King," *Christmas Stories and Legends*, Curtiss.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC. Selected Christmas music. "While we listen to more Christmas music, try to think of some good ways by which we might celebrate Jesus' birthday this year."

CHILDREN'S RESPONSES. Giving gifts, making other people happy, calling on shut-ins, sending greeting cards, singing carols, and other specific suggestions. (Suggest that the children think more about all these ideas in the class groups and during the next week, so that further plans may be made to do some of these things in honor of Jesus' birthday.)

PRAYER. Give thanks to God for Jesus, and ask that plans for his birthday may make him happy as well as make others happy.

CHRISTMAS SONG AND OFFERING SERVICE.

2. When We Like To Sing

PREPARATION. Use in the worship center today a picture of children singing. Perhaps an older child from another department may be asked to play several selections on a violin or another instrument, for this should be a session filled with joyous music.

Remind the children how dull Christmas would be were there no singing or music. Christmas is a happy time and we like to express our happiness through singing. Introduce the guest musician.

SONG FEST. Let this be a period when guest and children join talent and voices in familiar Christmas songs. Let the pupils suggest songs that they would like to sing. Try to discover why the song is liked. Does it remind them of a picture in the room? What pictures do the words bring to the mind when eyes are closed? The guest also may be used to introduce the music of a new Christmas song. Do

not try to learn many new songs at this season, but perhaps there should be one good new one each year. Among the songs that may be used during this period are "Away in a Manger," "Silent Night," "Why Do Bells at Christmas Ring?" "Bethlehem Lullaby," "Carol Children, Carol," and other songs. Consult your primary songbooks.

SCRIPTURE. The First Christmas Song, Luke 2: 8-14.

SONG. "Glory to God in the Highest." If this is not familiar, ask individual children to sing the words of Luke 2: 14, making up their own music.

POEM. Read a stanza or two of an unfamiliar Christmas song relating to the verses read from the Bible. In songbooks there are many lovely poems never used because we do not have time to learn the music to which they are set.

LEADER. "I believe we all want to thank God this morning for the people who have written these lovely songs, for the people who can play them on instruments so we can enjoy them more, and for our own voices. While our guest (or pianist) plays softly for us, you may speak to God quietly in your own ways."

PRAYER MUSIC. "O Come and Let Us Worship," followed by a short pause, then the refrain, "Father, We Thank Thee." The leader may voice a concluding sentence of prayer for the things suggested.

OFFERING SERVICE. This may be followed with a discussion concerning the plans for sharing special gifts in honor of Jesus' birthday.

3. When We Make Other People Happy

PREPARATION. A Christmas crèche may be arranged on the worship center today. Place some greens behind it, and, if you like, candles at each side. Place the offering basket before the crèche.

QUIET MUSIC. A Christmas carol.

CALL TO WORSHIP. "O Come and Let Us Worship."

CONVERSATION. Probably the children have brought gifts of food and other things to share with needy people. If so, let the children talk about the gifts and remind the class how happy somebody will be to receive Richard's can of peas or Dorothy's warm pair of stockings. Then ask, "Why do we give gifts to each other at Christmas?" Responses may include, "to make people happy," "to help people in need," and other ideas. Then say, "And I think we give gifts because of some things we read in the Bible. Jack will read for us and tell us who gave the first Christmas gift and why he gave it."

BIBLE VERSE. John 3: 16.

A FAMILIAR CHRISTMAS SONG.

BIBLE STORY. "There is also a beautiful story in the Bible that tells about some long-ago gifts. Let us hear the story now." (Matt. 2: 1-11. If third-year pupils have memorized this passage or part of it, let them say it for the group now. If not, you should tell or read it.)

PICTURE STUDY. Study a picture of the Wise Men presenting gifts. How many Wise Men are there? Do they seem to come from the same land? Look at the faces. Are they of the same race? (Usually one appears to be a Negro.) Examine the gifts. Why do you think they have made this long journey to bring these gifts. (Because of love.)

SONG. Select one about the Wise Men or giving gifts.

DRAMATIZATION AND OFFERING SERVICE. "Since you have brought gifts today to make other people happy and in honor of Jesus' birthday, I am wondering if you would like to play that you are bringing your gifts to the baby Jesus as the Wise Men did long ago. You may place your money gifts in the basket before the manger, and your package gifts on the floor around the manger. After we place our gifts we shall all kneel quietly before the manger as we worship, and then we may tell God how glad we are for the Gift of Jesus, and that we hope our gifts will make some people happy in honor of Jesus. Let us take our gifts and go quietly to the rear of the room as Miss ———— plays softly." (This experience may be a lovely combination of dramatization and worship if the group is not too large. If the shepherd story is reviewed today, the dramatization may include also Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds bringing gifts. Worshipful Christmas music should lead to a brief period of silence and a concluding prayer.)

4. When We Recall Happy Experiences

PREPARATION. Although Christmas is past, recent experiences will stimulate much conversation about Christmas today. Therefore, worship materials may still be related to the Christmas theme. This will be a good time to recall memory work that has been emphasized during the study of the Christmas units. The worship service today may well be a sharing period wherein class groups or individuals share some of the stories, poems, Bible verses, or songs that they have learned to like. To make the experience worshipful the leader should be familiar with the work of various class groups and should organize the contributions to the service so they will build a worshipful climax. The children should be prepared to share their contributions so no time will be wasted. The service may be organized something like this:

QUIET MUSIC. Christmas music selected by a pupil.

CALL TO WORSHIP. "O Come and Let Us Worship."

SONG. Selected by a class group.

A CHRISTMAS POEM. Read or recited by a pupil.

RECALL OF CHRISTMAS STORY WITH PICTURE STUDIES. Pupils from different class groups should be prepared to tell briefly about the Annunciation, the shepherd story, and the visit of the Wise Men. Each pupil may select and hold a picture related to his part of the story while he tells the story. Following each part, the leader may comment further concerning the picture and omitted details of the story. During this review, the picture study or conversation will probably lead to a desire to sing appropriate songs. If desired, each class group may wish to dramatize their part of the Christmas story, using some colorful but simple costumes.

RECALL OF BIBLE VERSES. If there is no dramatization, the conversation following the picture studies should include a review of the verses emphasized in class during the month. The following verses may be used:

"God so loved the world, that he gave his . . . . Son," John 3: 16.

"He loved us, and sent his Son," 1 John 4: 10.

"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live," Psalm 104: 33.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive," Acts 20: 35.

Conclude with the offering service and a group song.

DECEMBER
In the Nursery Class

(Continued from page 26)

We have a happy time making gifts today."

Third Sunday

This will be the Sunday preceding Christmas Day and if no weekday party is planned, a small tree may be provided. Have up the same pictures used the last Sunday with a few added of children with Christmas gifts. Activities may be repeated from last Sunday. Talk about the pictures and the crèche and retell the story of Jesus' birthday if interest is shown. Talk about birthdays and tell the story, "Gifts on Jesus' Birthday." Suggest that the children thank God for Jesus' birthday. Sing the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me." The tree may be trimmed by the children, using ornaments of tinsel which they can put on by themselves. Finish the gifts started the Sunday before and help them to wrap their own. A cut-out star covered with gilt or bright-colored paper may be given each one to take home for his tree.

(*Please turn to page 32*)

God So Loved the World

By MARY W. DEICHMAN

As another Christmas season approaches, we wonder what we can say to juniors about the angel's song, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," when never before in the history of the world has there been less peace and good will and more hate and suffering. It is a challenge to us to help boys and girls to realize that God, who has given us this beautiful world to enjoy, would still have the angel's song very real, and that it is only because of man's greed and selfishness that we face the world as it is today.

Throughout this Christmas season, centered as it will be around the coming of Jesus, may we help our juniors to love and appreciate Jesus more as God's best Gift, and may we so guide them that they will want to give God his place in their lives. Through song, story, picture, and prayer, we will follow the Wise Men to the manger with our gifts of love and service.

We will want to take full advantage of the season to sing the lovely Christmas carols, being sure to include one or two new hymns in addition to those we know and love. New hymns become more interesting as we know their stories. *Famous Hymns with Stories and Pictures,* by Elizabeth H. Bonsall, is a helpful book to own. The carol, "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella," and its story may be found in the "Bible Study Guide for Juniors," Course IV, Part 1, of the new Judson Keystone Graded Series.

Materials for our worship services should be chosen carefully, taking into account the backgrounds and special needs of our juniors. Here are a few suggestions for helpful material: Resource Sheet No. 9 of Course IV, Part 1, contains costume suggestions for a Christmas play and helps for such a dramatization will be found in the Teacher's Book. Resource Sheet No. 10 is the picture, "The Visit of the Wise Men," by Hofmann. Usable stories include "The Other Wise Man" and "The Christmas Fairies' Gift," from *Junior Worship Materials,* by Nellie V. Burgess, "The Worker in Sandelwood" and "A Gift Should Be Given," from *More Missionary Stories To Tell.* A Christmas pageant, "Worship for the King," was printed in the BAPTIST LEADER for December, 1939.

Plan to have a service project ready to present to the boys and girls on the first Sunday of the month. Many Junior Departments join the church in filling Christmas baskets, or adopting a needy family and providing the Christmas dinner and individual gifts for the children, many of which might be made by the boys and girls.

1. God Gives Us Good Gifts

QUIET MUSIC. "Nazareth," by Gounod, or one of the lovely Christmas hymns.

CALL TO WORSHIP.

Leader: Psalm 117.

Response:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of thee!
Heaven and earth are praising thee,
O Lord, most high! Amen."
(Refrain of "Day Is Dying in the West.")

PRAYER. Thanking the heavenly Father for his many gifts to us, as mentioned by the boys and girls before the prayer, and for his best Gift of all, Jesus, who came into the world and gave his life for us. Encourage sentence prayers from the children. Often a suggestion, a line or two written and handed to several in the group before the service begins, will help them to learn to pray audibly. Close with the Lord's Prayer.

HYMN. "God Who Touchest Earth with Beauty," or some other nature hymn. (Read it through, calling attention to these many gifts.)

LEADER. This month we shall be thinking about Christmas, why we celebrate it and what it means in the lives of Christian people. Who can tell us two words of which we think especially at this time of year? ("Loving" and "giving.") Because God loves us so much, he is always giving us good gifts. Shall we say together the verse in the Bible that tells us this? "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father."

The writer of the hymn we have just sung knew about many of these good gifts, and wanted to be like them. There are many other gifts, too, yet all over the world today many people cannot enjoy them because men have been selfish and cruel. Christmas this year will be very different for boys and girls in those places where fighting is going on. This month we shall be thinking about the many gifts we still have and of ways in which we can show our appreciation by making our lives count in service for Jesus.

OFFERING.

Leader: What was God's great Christmas gift of love to us?

Response: John 3: 16.

Leader: What is the greatest gift of love we can give him?

Response: First, we can give ourselves in service to God; then we can give our gifts to help others who need help.

OFFERING SONG PRAYER. "Our Gifts We Share."[1] (Tune: Serenity.)

HYMN. "Friend of the Young,"[1] or a Christmas carol.

2. His Best Gift

QUIET MUSIC. "Adeste Fideles."

CALL TO WORSHIP. Psalm 117.

PRAYER. Among the many treasures we find in God's Word is the perfect prayer, which Jesus taught his friends when they asked him to show them how to talk to their Father. As we approach his birthday, we, too, like to think aloud these thoughts that he gave us. (Pray the Lord's Prayer.)

HYMN. "Joy to the World."

SCRIPTURE. Looking forward to the Saviour's birth. Isaiah 9: 6-7; 40: 9-11; Micah 5: 2, 4-5*a*.

LEADER. Long years ago prophets foretold of the arrival of this wonderful Gift from God to his people everywhere. Some of these prophecies we have read from God's Word. Shall we now turn to the New Testament and read the Christmas story? (Read Luke 2: 8-20 or have it given from memory if one or more juniors have learned it.)

HYMN. "O Little Town of Bethlehem."[1]

STORY. See suggestions in introductory paragraphs.

HYMN. "Friend of the Young" or "I Would Be True."[1]

3. Our Gifts on His Birthday

QUIET MUSIC.

CALL TO WORSHIP.

SCRIPTURE. Luke 2: 8-20.

HYMN. "Joy to the World" or "O Little Town of Bethlehem."[1]

LEADER. Birthdays are happy days, aren't they? Why? Have you ever stopped to think that on Jesus' birthday we give so much more to everyone else than we do to Jesus, and that some people never think of him at all? How would you feel if on your birthday everyone else had presents and no one thought of you? What are some of the things that we can bring to Jesus today as our birthday gift to him? List them, making certain that the thought is brought out that Jesus would have us give him our gifts of self, time, and talents as well as money. Always he is made happy when we give our lives in loving service.

STORY. "Where Love Is God Is," or "The Other Wise Man."

DEDICATION OF GIFTS AND OFFERINGS.

[1] *Hymns for Junior Worship.*

The White Gift or special Christmas project will be presented at this time to the person or persons who will deliver the gifts. A brief prayer of dedication should be offered, asking God to bless the gifts and the boys and girls who have made them possible.

4. Remembering Jesus' Birthday All Year

QUIET MUSIC. "Adeste Fideles."
CALL TO WORSHIP.
PRAYER.
HYMN. "Joy to the World."
SCRIPTURE. 1 John 4: 7-11; in unison, John 3: 16.
LEADER.

"Three kings came riding from far away,
Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar,
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they traveled by night and slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star."

—From "The Three Kings," Longfellow.

I have read to you from a poem that was written by our American poet, Longfellow. He wrote about the Wise Men who followed the star that led to the Christ child. From where do you suppose he learned about these Wise Men and the star? Where could he have found the story? Turn to Matthew 2: 1. Shall we turn to God's Word often so that we might know what he would have us do? Matthew 25: 34-40 tells us some things that we would want to know. We shall want to remember particularly the fortieth verse.

HYMN. "There's a Beautiful Star" or "We Would See Jesus." (*Hymnal for American Youth.*)

PRAYER. For dedication of lives to service.

"As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious God, may we
Evermore be led by thee." Amen.

HYMN. "I Would Be True" (sung softly).

December in the Nursery Class

(Concluded from page 30)

Fourth Sunday

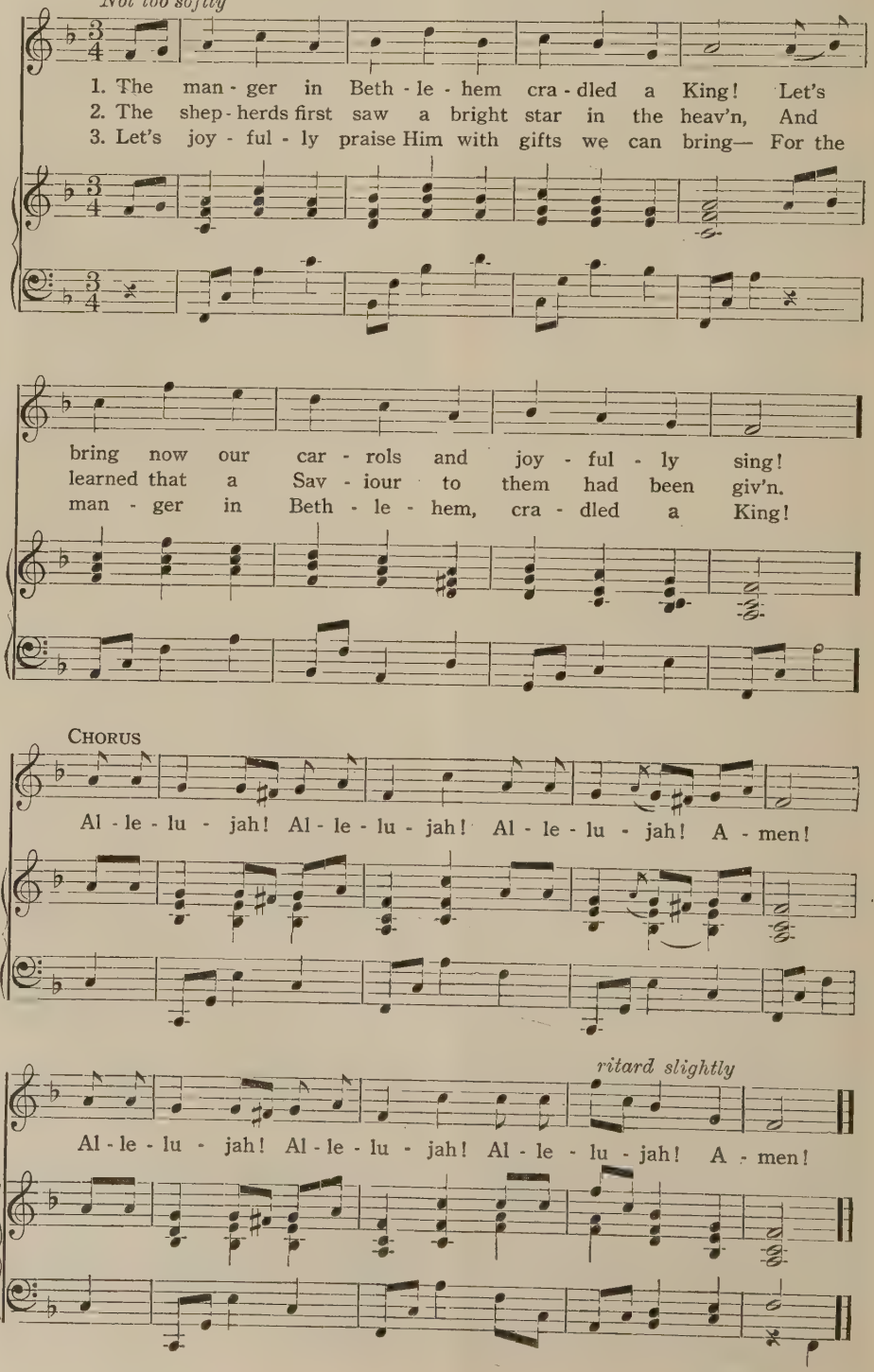
This will be only two days after Christmas and the children still will be interested in new toys received. The teachers may call or send notes to the mothers asking them to let each child bring a favorite toy to nursery class with him. Use the picture, "Putting Away Toys," from the Picture Set. Talk with the children about the toys they bring and encourage them to show them to each other. Most of them will not be willing to share them in play though this will be encouraged.

Retell the story, "Jesus' Birthday," or the "Wise Men," if either is asked for. A story is not necessary, for more may be accomplished through conversation and guidance in sharing their toys and experiences. Thoughts of the birthday of Jesus may run through all of the conversation and suggestions made that giving and sharing make us happy. A few new toys may be provided for those who may not bring any. Encourage the children to tell how they care for their toys at home and where they keep them. Help them to tie pieces of suet or bread on the tree and set it outside for the birds' Christmas tree. Sing "We have a happy time, a happy time in play, we have a happy time on happy Christmas Day."

The Manger Cradle

NONA KEEN DUFFY — FAITH CHAMBERS WILSON

Not too softly


1. The man - ger in Beth - le - hem cra - dled a King! Let's
2. The shep - herds first saw a bright star in the heav'n, And
3. Let's joy - ful - ly praise Him with gifts we can bring— For the
bring now our car - rols and joy - ful - ly sing!
learned that a Sav - iour to them had been giv'n.
man - ger in Beth - le - hem, cra - dled a King!
CHORUS
Al - le - lu - jah! Al - le - lu - jah! Al - le - lu - jah! A - men!
ritard slightly
Al - le - lu - jah! Al - le - lu - jah! Al - le - lu - jah! A - men!

The Way of Peace and Good Will[1]

By MABEL NIEDERMEYER

Purpose and Scope

This is a four weeks' study for juniors planned to emphasize the Christmas message of peace and good will. It will not discuss the facts of the present war or of any war as such, but will deal with the positive way of brotherhood and good will as the basis of all of our human relationships. The boys and girls will be led, through a study of the teachings and example of Jesus, to discover the principles of Christian living which make for peace. They will also come to see the application of those principles in their own group living and come to know men and women of today who are seeking to practice them in their lives as well. The findings of the Delaware Conference on a "Just and Durable Peace" will be introduced in simplified form so that the juniors may know that Christian men and women are eager to find and establish a peaceful way of living among the nations of the world.

The Juniors and This Study

It is well that boys and girls be given help in finding principles of peaceful living based on the teachings of Jesus to serve as the standard for personal, group, and national actions today. Many of them are confused by the events that are taking place in the world. They read and hear about the war on every hand. They see pictures, posters, and movies showing war preparations and activities. They are urged to buy defense stamps. The war may have already claimed a relative or friend by death in action. In some parts of the country they are experiencing blackouts and air-raid drills. They are touched by war rationings, drives to conserve materials of various kinds, and war work in general. The war is also pointing up differences in races and nationalities, resulting in increased tensions and discrimination against those of other races.

Over against these factors are some positive ones. Some children are fortunate in having the guidance of Christian world-minded adults. Juniors are receiving training in Christian ways of thought and belief. They have taken part in projects of good will upon former occasions, and at this particular season their minds are again active with plans of sharing and helpfulness. They have heard of outstanding leaders of different nations and races, and some may have children of other nationalities as friends or classmates.

[1] From outlines copyrighted by the International Council of Religious Education.

Objectives in View

Bearing these relationships and experiences of the children in mind, this study should achieve the following objectives in their lives:

1. An increased understanding and appreciation of the principles of living that will lead to peace and good will as taught by Jesus and exemplified in his own life.
2. A consciousness of the fact that those principles are in keeping with God's plan for a world brotherhood.
3. A knowledge of some of the workers who are seeking to establish peace and good will through their service to others.
4. A belief in the ultimate goodness of the world, and a recognition of the fact that present conditions exist only because men and nations have not lived their lives in harmony with the teachings of Jesus.
5. A discovery of ways in which juniors can help to build a peaceful world and the creation of a desire to do their part.
6. A growing sense of gratitude to God, expressed through worship, for the ways in which the life and teachings of Jesus have made good will real to us.

The Unit Development

This study will be developed through Bible study which seeks to discover the teachings of Jesus in this realm, through directed discussions of the ways of peaceful living, and through a consideration of men and women who are living lives of usefulness and good will. Activities in connection with it may include making a series of posters or a wall border which carry out the thought of the Bible teachings, planning and conducting a worship service in which thanks is given for the life and teachings of Jesus and for those who have lived and are now living lives of service and good will, and active participation in some project of good will.

Session 1. December 6

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM

Today you will seek to guide the juniors into an appreciation of the Christmas message of "peace and good will" and help them plan for this study so that it will contribute most toward that end.

Go over the session plans with the junior who will be in charge. Plan who will lead the discussion and planning period. Be ready to make your own suggestions when needed.

In your message help the juniors to see that Jesus came to a very imperfect world to show men God's love for all people, and to lead them to live in love and good will according to God's plan of brotherhood. Include the thought that the world today needs that same message and that we who call ourselves Christians must seek to live as Jesus taught so that others may come to know God's way of peace and good will.

Session Outline

INFORMAL DISCUSSION ABOUT CHRISTMAS PLANS. Include an evaluation of them in the light of the "peace and good will" emphasis of this season.

QUIET MUSIC. "Silent Night."

CALL TO WORSHIP. Luke 2: 10-11.

HYMN. "Joy to the World."

SCRIPTURE READING. Isaiah 9: 6-7*a*.

MESSAGE. "The World to Which Jesus Came." (By adult counselor.)

PRAYER.

PRAYER HYMN RESPONSE. "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord."

OFFERING SERVICE.

PLANNING PERIOD. (See *Juniors.*)

CLOSING HYMN. "Fairest Lord Jesus."

Session 2. December 13

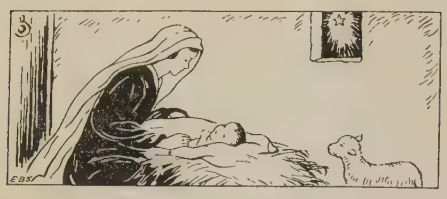
BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Your purpose today will be to help the juniors to discover those teachings of Jesus which, if put into daily living, will make for peace and good will between peoples and nations. You will need to help them to see that just like any rules, they will have to be followed by both sides if they are expected to work.

Some of your juniors may say something about "overcoming evil with good" not being workable these days, or make a similar remark about another of the teachings of Jesus on peace. In such cases help them to see that when evil becomes so entrenched in life, it cannot easily be overcome even with good; that perhaps the way of love may seem to fail at first, but after a while, the good will win out. Lead them to see that the way of love is a way of suffering at times, too, but that one person needs to be willing to make the start and to suffer, in trying to overcome evil with good. Jesus said that is the part for the Christians to play.

This will be a part of the discussion in connection with the Bible study. Do not curb any of the questions or comments which the juniors may make. Try to help them to find satisfactory answers.

Base your message today on the scripture passage in Romans. Point up the ordinary virtues of Christian living as those "things which make for peace." A willingness to help others and to share what you have for the good of all; a desire to do more than one's part; a thoughtfulness for others and their in-



Christmas Day

By Dolores Bingaman

Christmas is caring;
Christmas is sharing;
Christmas is happiness
All round the earth.
Kneel as the shepherds knelt,
Love, with the love they felt,
Sing as the angels sang
Telling Christ's birth.

Long-ago holy night,
Blest be thy holy light
Leading us faithfully
All the long way!
Bless, little Infant King,
Each gift the children bring,
Caring, and sharing
Their glad Christmas Day.

---

terests and wishes; the spirit of forgiveness; being trustworthy and dependable; not insisting upon having your own way; consideration for the desires of others, and similar virtues. Suggest that living the way of peace and good will begins at home and is carried from there into other group relationships. Help them to see that groups of people and even nations can follow after "these things which make for peace," too.

Be ready to add your story of a loving act of good will toward another to the story-sharing period today.

Session Outline

Discussion. "What Causes Quarrels?" (Led by a junior or an adult counselor.)
Bible Study. Matthew 18: 21-22; 5: 38-42; 5: 43-48; 22: 37-39; 7: 1-5; 6: 12; 7: 12; Mark 9: 50*b* (Be at peace one with another); Luke 6: 27-38; John 13: 34-35. (These passages of Scripture are to be checked against the causes of quarrels as listed during the discussion to see if they help to solve any of them.)
Music. "O Little Town of Bethlehem."
Call to Worship.
Hymn. "O Little Town of Bethlehem."
Scripture Reading. Romans 14: 19.
Message. "The Things Which Make for Peace." (By adult counselor.)
Prayer. (For help in doing those things which make for peace.)
Offertory Service.
Story-sharing Period.
Report of Committee on Gift Project.
Work Period. Begin the work planned a week ago.
Closing Hymn. "Fairest Lord Jesus."

Session 3. December 20

MESSENGERS OF GOOD WILL

Today your juniors will discover some messengers of peace and good will, who through their lives have demonstrated their belief in love and service for all mankind. The Conscientious Objectors in this present war have been included as one of the groups which are standing for the way of peace. Any information about boys the children may know who are in one of the Civilian Public Service Camps will help them to understand this position. If there is a boy from your own church who has registered as a Conscientious Objector, be sure to cite him as one member of this group. For those of you living near a camp, information about that work will make this phase of the study most specific. In discussing the whole matter, help the children to see that the decision not to fight is a matter of individual conscience, and that just as we differ on other matters, we differ on that issue, too. Should the children feel that a Conscientious Objector is a coward, you will, of course, help to correct that attitude.

If you have not seen a copy of the report of the Delaware Conference, write to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. (Price, 15 cents.) You should be familiar with the results of that conference as you present that brief report to your juniors today. The purpose of including it is not to give the boys and girls a complete understanding of what was done, but to make them aware of the fact that Christians are concerned about the kind of peace which will be made after the war is over, and that they are trying to prepare our country to take its part in making peace.

Materials on the Civilian Public Service Camps can be obtained through the World Emergency Fund, 152 Madison Avenue, New York, and also from the American Friends Service Committee, 20 South 12th Street, Philadelphia.

Session Outline

A Game of Discovery.
Reports and Discussion.
Civilian Public Service Camps
The Delaware Peace Conference
Stories of Love and Good Will.
Activity Period. Completing window, adding news items to bulletin board or record-book, working on posters or wall borders.
Writing a Litany.
Quiet Music.
Call to Worship. John 3: 16.
Hymn. "Joy to the World."
Scripture Reading. Isaiah 52: 7; Psalm 34: 14; Matthew 5: 9.
Comment on Scripture Reading. (By adult counselor.) During this brief message refer to the three verses of Scripture that have been read as the views of three religious leaders of different times and conditions of life on the position of those who seek to bring peace to the world. Refer to the reports given by the juniors, calling attention to individuals and groups who are seeking to find a way of peaceful living for all of us. Bring out the fact that men and women have always sought for a way of peace, and that only as Christians throughout the world are willing to work and sacrifice for peace, will it be accomplished.
Prayer. For men and women to strive more earnestly for peace.
Offering Service.
Closing Hymn. "O Little Town of Bethlehem." (Use the last verse as your closing prayer.)

Session 4. December 27

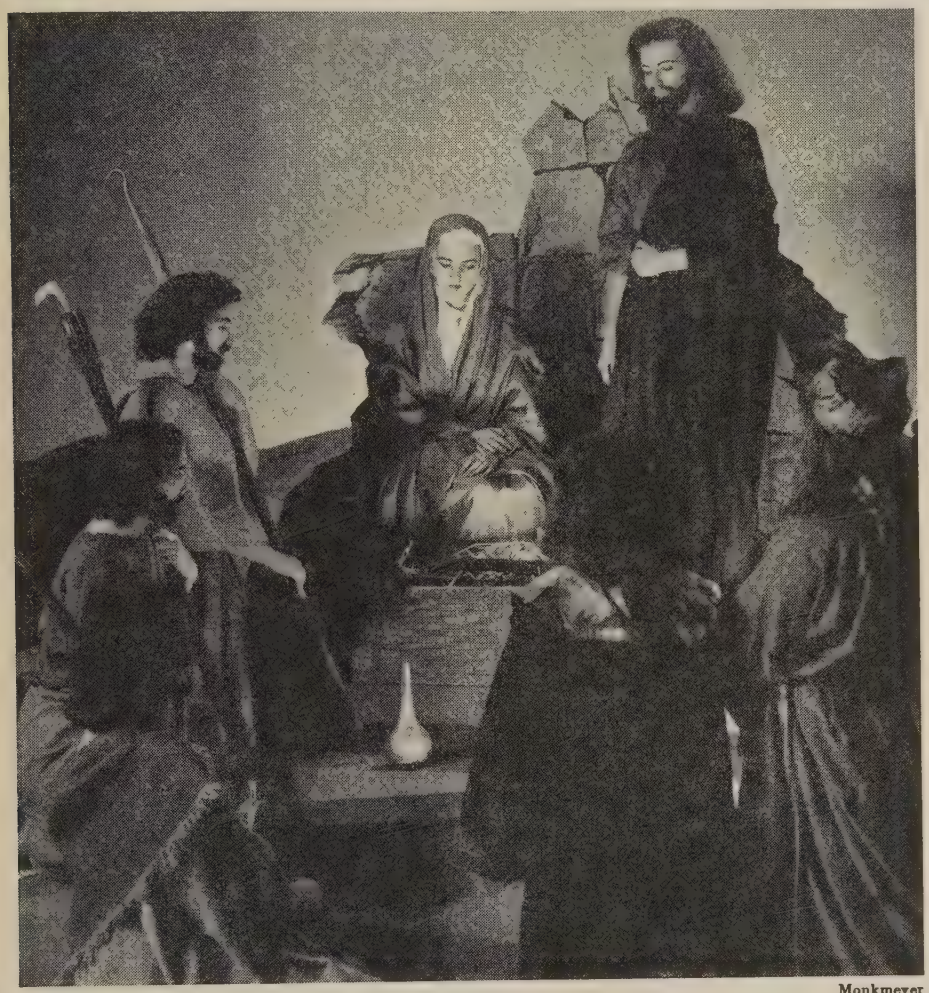
PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN

Today your juniors should discover ways in which they can help to build toward peace and good will throughout the world. You are to guide them as they make a list of the things which they can do toward that end. Help them to see that as they settle their quarrels and disputes peaceably now, as they discover ways of living with others in peace and good will now, they are learning to make greater contributions toward that end when they are older.

It might be well for you to write to the American Friends Service Committee for information about their work. This can be distributed to the children for their report today in addition to the material given in *Juniors*.

Session Outline

Report and Discussion Period.
Story-sharing Period.
Considering Our Part. (Led by adult counselor.) You will guide the juniors as they think of ways in which they may help to build peace and good will throughout the world.
Activity Period.
Quiet Music.
Call to Worship. Romans 14: 19.
Hymn. "Fairest Lord Jesus."
Scripture Reading. John 15: 1-15.
Offering Service.
Friendship Circle.
Read together "peace code" made earlier in session.
Pray the Litany, written last week.
Prayer Hymn. "O Little Town of Bethlehem." (Verse 4.)
Closing Planning Period. (On use of materials made during this study.)



Monkmeyer

FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS, STUDENTS AT THE TEXAS COLLEGE FOR WOMEN (DENTON, TEXAS) HAVE PRODUCED A NATIVITY PLAY AS PART OF THEIR CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS. WELL ACTED AND SIMPLY BUT BEAUTIFULLY STAGED, THE PRODUCTION IS A CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT OF THE DRAMATIC CLUBS, THE CHORAL GROUPS AND THE ART STUDENTS. DR. L. H. HUBBARD, PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE, WROTE THE TEXT

For the Shepherds
A SONG

A Christmas Worship Service
For Choir and Choric-Speaking Group

By LUCY WETZEL McMILLIN

CALL TO WORSHIP.

Leader.

Come ye, come ye all;
Let us worship.
Let us bow down,
As did shepherds of old;
Let us sing praises to the Babe
of Bethlehem.

HYMN, *choir and congregation,* "Holy Night! Peaceful Night!"

IT IS CHRISTMAS

Reader.

It is Christmas!
Crowds, excitement, news,
News of the present;
Some of it bloody, awful.
Then on the air, a carol,
Softly, softly, "Jesu, Babe Divine."
Through many centuries,
A child, a star, a song.
And men have fought and killed
and ruled,
Then passed from sight.
Yet yearly, somewhere, someone
Lifts voice in carol clear;
Lifts tear-dimmed eyes
To Star, to Hope!
A Child, a little Child shall
lead.
And now again, 'tis Christmas.
Pause and pray;
Then lift your soul;
Join ye, with merry company
Who serve the Christ,
Jesu, Babe Divine.

Leader.

You've heard the story oft,
How Wise Men came
And offered gifts;
How they were guided by a Star,
The Star a heavenly gift to them.
And for the shepherds there
were stars,
And in the midst of glory there
were voices.
For shepherds, there was song.

Choir. "There's a Song in the Air."

Choric group. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

A woman's voice. Fear not: for behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

All voices. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

High voices. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.[1]

[1] Luke 2: 8-14.

PRAYER.

HYMN, *by the congregation,* "Noel." (Use only the shepherd verses.)

Leader.

Have we journeyed so far from the first Christmas eve,
That we hear not the angels' song?
Oh, at this special season of the year,
May we know kindred feeling
With those shepherd folk, near Bethlehem?
Let us go back to fair Judean hills,
And for a moment watch beneath a winter sky.

Reader. And there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Men's voices.

Great God, let us be true to all
Our work today,
Whether in fields, with flocks,
Or in the factory's deafening hum.
Grant us keen wisdom,
That our work may be well done.
May we be faithful to these tasks,
And looking up to thee,
Find guiding Light.

Reader. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and they were sore afraid.

All voices.

On that night long ago,
Fear clutched the hearts of many men.
Today, fear rides untamed through
Countryside and city street.
Hatred and bloody death
Have been the lot of thousands of thy children.

Women's voices.

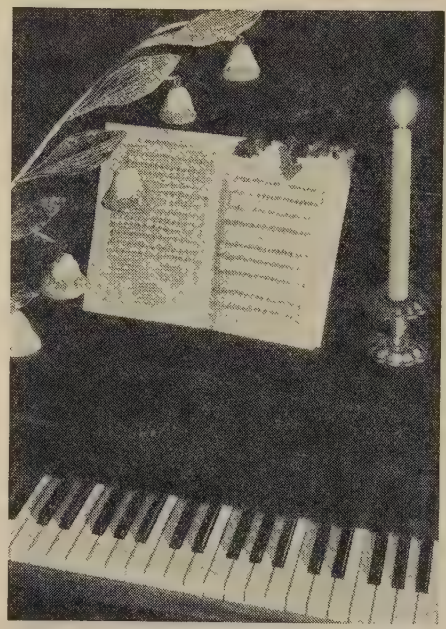
So many homes destroyed,
And voices raised in loud lament,
As Rachel was in other days, uncomforted.

Men's voices.

Great God of hosts,
Be with us now!
Send us an angel voice.
Speak to our hearts
Thy courage and thy peace.
Not peace that lets men drift,
Drift downward, or away from thee,
But an abiding peace,
A peace that passes understanding,
The peace of Christ himself.

Reader.

I wonder on that night of long ago,



Monkmeyer

Did all the shepherds heed the angel song?
Did they all go, to seek the Babe,
Or did some tarry—indifferent to heavenly hosts!

Women's voices.

A legend tells us that a few
Did not go into Bethlehem
On that glad night.
Could we be guilty of the same offense?
Not caring, when the very God himself
Comes down to earth?
Comes asking that we love
And serve our brethren?

Men's voices.

Luke tells us of the men who went swiftly,
And in Bethlehem, in manger bed,
They found the Christ.
They worshiped him!
For them Divinity came down to earth.
The Babe of Bethlehem, the Christ child,
Prince of Peace.

Women's voices.

It is not strange that as they left the manger,
They raised their voices, glorifying God,
Praising him for his great blessing,
For love infinite and real.

Leader. And Mary said,

Mary. My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exhalted them of low degree.[2]

Leader. And Mary kept these many things within her heart.

Reader.

Today, the mothers of the world
Keep fondly thoughts of that first time
They held close to their hearts
Their sons and daughters.
Heart memories, God's gift to mothers;
Mothers whose sons and daughters
Bravely serve mankind.

HYMN, *by the congregation,* "It Came upon the Midnight Clear."

Leader.

From out the past the ancients speak.
Shall we not heed their message?
They tell good news, and promises of joy from God,
Our Mighty Lord, and from his Son,
Emmanuel, God with us.

First voice. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end . . . . to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.[3]

Second voice. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Third voice. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid.[4] They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.[5]

(Please turn to page 45)

[2] Luke 1: 46-49, 52.
[3] Isaiah 9: 2, 6, 7.
[4] Micah 4: 2-4.
[5] Isaiah 11: 9.

"Watchman, What of the Night?"

By EVELYN W. WELLS

Suggestions for Production

Participants: Choir (robed, if possible) a reader, and the pastor. If desired, the pastor can act as reader also. In some churches this might be the most desirable arrangement. The reader should have a mature voice, ringing with determination, yet covering the tones of retrospect, indictment, earnest query, prediction—all these with force but also with restraint. The reader needs to sustain a flowing, poetic quality essential to preserve the rhythm of the lines.

Music: The choir selections will be improved in proportion to the number of rehearsals. The service is worth doing as close to perfection as possible. All of the music suggested will be found in the *American Student Hymnal;* the numbers indicated in the script are the numbers in this hymnal.

Time: The service is most effective as a Watch Night Service—starting about 11.30 New Year's Eve. It can also be used as a regular evening vesper service.

THE SERVICE

PROCESSIONAL (robed choir): No. 351, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

CALL TO WORSHIP (by the pastor):

As the old year passes away, and is gone,
And the new year enters, yet unfulfilled,
O come, let us worship and bow down;
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For "behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,
And he will dwell with them,
And they shall be his people,
And God himself shall be with them,
And be their God.
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;
And there shall be no more death,
Neither sorrow, nor crying,
Neither shall there be any more pain:
For the former things are passed away."

Monkmeyer

O come, let us worship and bow down,
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;
As the old year passes away, and is gone,
And the new year enters, yet unfulfilled,
Let us lift up our hearts unto him who said,
Behold, I make all things new.
Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING. No. 60, "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life."

SCRIPTURE (read responsively):

LEADER:

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,
Get thee up on a high mountain;
O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem,
Lift up thy voice with strength;
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say unto the cities of Judah,
Behold, your God! (Isa. 40: 9.)

CONGREGATION:

How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
That publisheth peace,
That bringeth good tidings of good,
That publisheth salvation,
That saith unto Zion,
Thy God reigneth! (Isa. 52: 7.)

LEADER:

Ho, every one that thirsteth,
Come ye to the waters,
And he that hath no money;
Come ye, buy, and eat;
Yea, come buy wine and milk
Without money
And without price. (Isa. 55: 1.)

CONGREGATION:

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found;
Call ye upon him while he is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return unto the Lord,
And he will have mercy upon him;
And to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isa. 55: 6-7.)

LEADER:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,
That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,
And with the house of Judah:
After those days, saith the Lord,
I will put my law in their inward parts,
And in their heart will I write it;

And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
(Jer. 31: 31, 33.)

CONGREGATION:

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place
In all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
(Ps. 90: 1-2).

CHOIR: Chant, "After Those Days, Saith the Lord" (printed below).

PRELUDE (Chimes)

READER:

"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die."

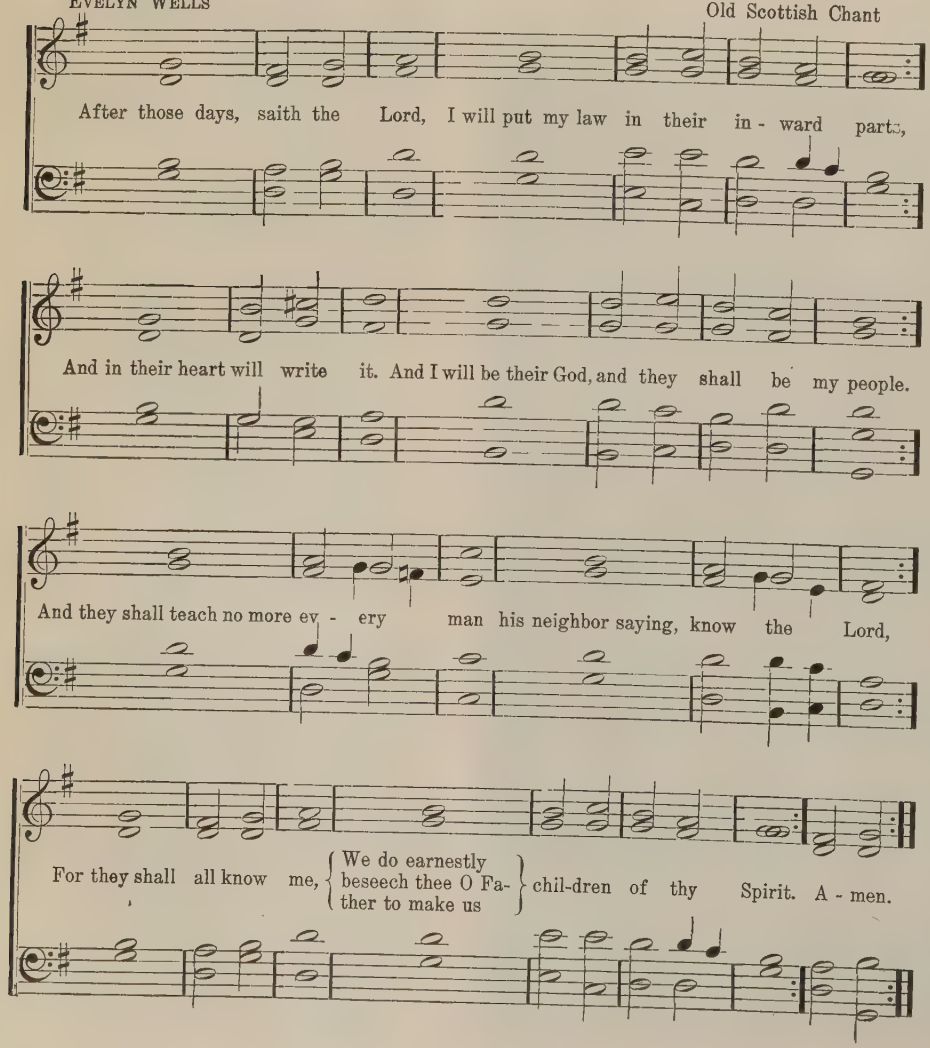
What of the year which passes with the night?
What of the year we eagerly dismiss?
Twelve months ago did we not welcome it across the silent snow,
Clutching within its infant fists
The priceless gifts of faith and hope we cherish still?
What of the year we readily thrust by,
An outworn disappointment on the crooked path of time?
Did we not usher it in with majestic songs of praise?
Remember the night of its birth?
Remember the hope
That this year would see the end of war?
Remember the promise
That this year would bring to all men the abundant life—
The factory worker and the tenant farmer,
And even the man who could not work?
Remember the sermons about the new leaf?
Remember the admonitions to grasp with the new year a firmer hold on life?

"After Those Days, Saith the Lord"

JEREMIAH 31 : 33, 34

Special arrangement 1939,
EVELYN WELLS

Old Scottish Chant


After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their in - ward parts,
And in their heart will write it. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
And they shall teach no more ev - ery man his neighbor saying, know the Lord,
For they shall all know me, { We do earnestly beseech thee O Father to make us } chil-dren of thy Spirit. A - men.

Remember the resolutions we all made
About the new start on life's long road?
Remember it all?
Remember—Remember well
How we ushered in the year we now discard,
This year that now we lay by
As a disappointing epoch
In the ages of eternity.

CHOIR (No. 324, first stanza):

"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die."

READER:

But lo, the year that passes with the night
Is an outworn thing,
Besmeared with war and poverty and sordid hate.
It has enfolded nation rising against nation in bloody feud;
It has enfolded man rising against his fellow-man in murderous strife;
It has enfolded hungry children and shelterless bundles of humanity
In the shadows of the mansions that store plenty.
The year that passes with the night is a tired, selfish thing,
It has enfolded petty prejudice and pagan thought,
And blasphemy against the Son of God.
The year that ends tonight is hypocritical, unholy:
It has harbored the Church of Christ
But trampled his spirit in the dust of hatred and bigotry.
The year that ends tonight,
The year that passes unlamented over the silent snow
Is a pitiable thud of irony
Against the faith and hope that ushered in its infancy.

CHOIR (No. 324, third stanza):

"Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind."

READER:

How did the year thus born of faith and hope
Turn in upon itself and end gray ash?
What changed the strains of peace to crashing chords of war?
How did the notes of prosperity fade to the dirge of poverty and starvation?
How did the admonitions and the resolutions for Good Life shatter into practices of paganism?
Remember that the "Year of Peace" was heralded by the sound of guns.
Remember that the "Year of Pros-

perity" was ushered in with regal parties of greed.
Remember that the "Year for Christ" was welcomed by the cold white church—
Secure and solitary, unhampered on the hill,
Save on the Sundays, when its doors open for "services."
The weary year that passes with this night
Is what it is—an outworn, ugly thing—
Because we made it so.
It opened with the hope of peace and Christian love.
But we sounded the guns of our hatred,
And reared the bulwarks of our prejudice,
And fashioned the year to the pattern of war.
We gulped our greed,
And made the year fit the pattern of poverty and starvation.

The year that ends tonight,
The tired year that passes over the silent snow
Into the annals of eternity
Is what it is because we made it so.

CHOIR (No. 324, fourth stanza):
"Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace."

READER:
What of the year approaching with the night,
The infant year we welcome to our midst?
What of the year that comes a new-born, fragile thing,
Out of the spaces of eternity?
It holds, as all our yesteryears have held, in their white infancy,
A vision of peace, a vision of prosperity—of the abundant life for all—
A vision of Christian love, of light eternal
Liberating humanity, saving all men to the quality of living that is God's plan.
What shall it be, this year that comes tonight,
This year that creeps in timid innocence into our annals of time?
This year shall be, as all our yesteryears have been,
What we shall fashion with the instruments we clasp from life:
We may resolve this night to make the year a time of love and peace,
But guns and battleships (which spring from hatred and intolerance in the heart)
May make it a war-torn, tired thing.
We may resolve this night to make the year end with comfort and abundant living for all,
But social and economic injustice (which spring from greed in the heart)
Can make it a pitiable legend of shivering bodies with skin tightening over the bones.
We may resolve this night to make this new year a time in which the Spirit of God shall reign in the hearts of men,
But bigotry and the closed white door of the cold church on the hill (which are born of hypocrisy and self-righteousness in the heart)
Have the power to make it an empty, groping thing without the light of God.
What of the year approaching with the night,
The infant year we welcome to our midst?
What of the year that comes, a new-born, fragile thing,
Out of the spaces of eternity?
It will be what we will make it,
What all of us will make it,
What each of us will make it.
What a responsibility we each must bear!
If we would have it breathe of peace, prosperity, and love,
And show values drawn from the Eternal Hills,
Then we must fashion it thus,
Weaving the spirit and light and strength of God
Into the tangled fabric of man's existence,
Melting the loving spirit of the everlasting Father
Into the fiber of humanity,
Enlightening the ignorance and prejudice of men
By the white torch of truth which is of God,
Replacing mankind's ire and destructive greed
With God's pure love, which ever lends itself in helpfulness,
Making the cold white church, aloof upon the hill,
A warm and living center, whence the rays of life eternal
Will flow forth without restraint
Uplifting the man at the wheel
and the man at the desk
and the man at the plow
and the man at the counter of buying and selling
and the family at the hearth—
Uplifting them all to a quality of living which is of God.
It rests with us—with you and me.
It has to start somewhere.
It rests with how we live and what we live by and what we live for

Each of its days.
It depends upon whether we *care* enough for peace
To tear down our prejudice and see the other side,
And be socially ostracized rather than be traitors to peace.
It depends upon whether we *care* enough for the abundant life for all
To eliminate our greed and forget our vested interests
And demand justice without a compromise
In the face of organized forces that deny it.
It depends upon whether we *care* enough for the Christian quality of life
To take up the cross which is its center.
It depends upon whether we *care* enough about the truth of God
To follow fearlessly and alone in its light.
It depends upon you and me.
It depends upon whether we care enough about the things for which we hope
To lose ourselves for their fulfillment.
Hail! Year approaching with the night!
Hail, infant year we welcome so over the silent snow,
Creeping, a new-born, fragile thing, out of the spaces of eternity,
Holding, as all our yesteryears have held in their white infancy,
A vision of peace, a vision of prosperity—of the abundant life for all—
A vision of Christian love, of eternal light liberating humanity,
Saving all men to a quality of living that is of God.

Hail! Year approaching with the night!
Hail, infant year!
Where lies thy destiny?
It rests with us—with each of us, with all of us,

(Please turn to page 45)

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CHOOSING

Our Teaching Methods

Where There Are Problems To Solve

By EDITH L. GILLET

ACQUAINTANCE with boys and girls of today almost inevitably brings the Christian leader to this conclusion: They are surrounded with a complexity of life never known before; they surely have their problems. But what can we do about it?

Junior high boys and girls hesitate to ask for help or advice; older young people often do not feel the need of it. Any attempt at soliciting confidence defeats its own purpose. There are, however, some problems more or less common to all young people, even though they do not always recognize them as such. These include the understanding of, and relationship to God, trying to follow the teachings of Jesus in everyday life, making and keeping friends, family relationships, finding one's place in life, and the interpretation of life's experiences. They are all planned for in some form in the prepared lesson materials for young people. Moreover, they arise more directly in conversations with them and in questions they ask. Situations frequently reveal the need for giving attention to these matters. One of the most helpful methods of teaching then becomes the discussion method.

The Discussion Method

"But I can't lead a discussion," is the objection some leader is sure to raise. True, this method has been used unsuccessfully by many. They find it difficult to maintain order, to keep the contributions of the group from becoming arguments, and to bring the process to any sort of conclusion.

Introducing the Discussion

The method is at its best when a group of boys and girls recognize a problem and have a desire to think seriously about it. A group of Senior High School girls who were studying the unit, "The Christian Faces Today's World," came to the lesson about gambling. At first it seemed that the subject affected them only remotely and then the question was raised about buying and selling chances. In their high school, tickets had been sold to help the athletic fund, and the person drawing the lucky number was given a jacket with the school emblem on it. Was there anything wrong about buying chances when the money went for a good cause? What about raffling off quilts at church suppers and giving door prizes at the men's banquet held in the church a few weeks ago? There was no lack of interest that morning as the problem of gambling in its present-day forms was considered.

Sometimes discussions may be stimulated and a subject introduced when a leader makes two conflicting statements, giving the pupils opportunity to choose the one representing their point of view. Again, a story can be told to the point of climax and the members of the group allowed to supply the possible conclusion or solution. Of course, it would be one involving a choice.

True—False or Multiple Choice tests about which there may be differences of opinion are another way of opening a discussion. Here again, the leader must be sure that the topic introduced has value and interest for the members of the group and is not simply a question for argument.

Some discussions will arise naturally out of class activity; others will be planned in advance to introduce a subject or settle a problem that has become evident. Some can be carried on successfully using the information the group already has. Others will require further investigation of facts and materials or the bringing in of other persons who can give the kind of help needed. Obviously, this will have to be decided on the merits of the case.

The Leader's Part

This method of teaching requires more preparation than any other because of the many angles to the subject that may be introduced when a number of people have part. While the teacher does not give a body of information as in the lecture method, he is expected to be the resource person, ready to suggest a new direction of thinking when needed, and to supply facts necessary to immediate procedure. From time to time, the main points covered need to be summarized or gathered up.

Two difficulties confront every leader who uses this method. The first is to refrain from interjecting his own opinions and conclusions too frequently. As a resource person, his own thinking will naturally enter in, but to monopolize the situation by speaking too often is to kill the enthusiasm of the participants. This is also true when his own predetermined conclusions are forced upon the group after a subject has been discussed. "What is the use of talking about it?" is the natural feeling of many young people under those circumstances.

The second difficulty is to keep the discussions from digressing into by-paths, interesting but irrelevant to the main question. While no one should be given the feeling of being "squelched," it is often necessary to draw attention to the fact that a point introduced is not pertinent. This must be done in order to maintain progress in thinking, if conclusions are to be reached.

One outstanding characteristic of the good discussion leader is his ability to

secure the participation of all the group. Every class has some who are eager to express themselves and others who are more reticent. While it will be impossible to secure the same type of response from all, at least the more aggressive ones should not be allowed to monopolize the time. Sometimes it is necessary to limit the number of times one person may speak, or in a larger group to place a restriction on the amount of time any one person may use. Recognizing the leader or chairman before speaking also helps to avoid the confusion of two or more persons talking at the same time. The more timid members may be encouraged by being given something special to do, as keeping minutes, looking up special information to be reported upon, making a summary at the close of the session or responding to leading questions. A show of hands indicating a point of view will include all the members.

Making Progress in the Discussion

1. Face the situation or state the problem. At times the real problem is not the one that appears on the surface. For example, a group of young people were talking together about the confusion during the worship services of their Sunday evening meetings. "What can we do to keep them quiet?" the president asked with deep concern. That was, indeed, a problem but not the underlying one. As a matter of fact, very little if any, preparation was being made in advance for these meetings; there was nothing about the atmosphere of the room or what went on there to inspire a spirit of reverence. When the young people came to recognize the real problem and the source of their difficulties, they were ready to discuss the factors entering into the situation and a possible solution.

2. Analysis of the problem. In other words, the next step is to get the facts of the case. Mere statement of opinion is not enough. When individuals merely contend for a certain point of view without regard for the facts, the process ceases to be a discussion. Those participating must be willing to accept criticism or refutation of their point of view as new facts are brought in. The value of this type of procedure consists in its being a search for truth, including the desire to reach sound conclusions. It involves the pooling of the best thinking of the group, plus all the information to be had on the subject. If the various points are listed on a blackboard they are more easily kept in mind. When the facts have been gathered and organized, it is time for the next step.

3. Consideration of the possible solutions. In some instances the course of action will be fairly clear. Many discussions, however, will require further investigations, study and inquiries. Various phases of the questions may be assigned to certain persons or small groups for consideration during the week. Reading of books and pamphlets on the subject, also observations of situations and interviews with individuals, will bring desired information to light. The leader can help by suggesting the most fruitful sources of information and by checking before the next meeting with those having major responsibilities to see what progress is being made. A well-informed person may be brought into the class after sufficient progress has been made for his help to have value.

By this time several courses of action should have been suggested. Skill and experience on the part of the leader will help the group to weigh the relative merits of the possible solutions or decisions and to discard those without value for the situation under discussion.

4. Reaching a decision or solution. How many discussions have we seen resolve themselves into mere "talk fests." This seems like a long process and the tendency on the part of teachers and pupils is to hurry it along or talk and talk without coming to decisions. However, if the step-by-step process described above has been followed, if the young people have seen the issue and discovered the facts about it, then they should be led to make their own decisions. Again, the leader does well to remind himself: *It is to be their decisions, not mine.*

Can we expect all the members to agree? Sometimes yes, and very often no. At least, they have had the experience of learning to respect the opinions of others and of altering or strengthening their own on the basis of facts.

In situations involving decision to action, the process is not complete until action itself has been initiated and carried out. There will still be the necessity for follow-up on the part of leaders and those of the group to whom responsibility has been delegated. Further discussions will be required in the evaluation of the activity.

For the inexperienced teacher, this process will require study and practice, but is well worth the effort. Teachers and pupils who are fellow-seekers after truth in this fashion enjoy a sense of satisfaction and comradeship not found in the more formal classroom procedure.

Note also the other methods of teaching and learning involved, investigations, personal and group study, personal interviews, group thinking, trips, observations, questions and answers, and materials shared by the teacher with the pupils. Through the variety of information thus introduced and the experiences provided, teaching may become truly creative.

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Alan Dell

Interesting YOUTH

In the TOTAL Church Program

By O. G. HERBRECHT

H. Armstrong Roberts

IT'S a great bunch," said my elderly friend. "If we could only interest them in the whole church program."

We were watching a group of several hundred young people in a conference. Youths from high school and college filled all the back seats. "Plenty of room up here in front" lured none of them. Here and there small conference notebooks passed through the pews for autographs. There were the usual number who had come for romance free from chaperones. It was a happy group.

On the platform a college chap was reporting a summer conference. Attention was limited. It is so hard to retail a summer conference. Then a young woman trained in directing school music swung them into a song period. Restlessness disappeared. Here was vocal exercise. Voices sang gleefully everything from "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean" to "Climbing Jacob's Ladder."

I turned to my elderly friend. "What you said a bit ago I hear so often. What do you mean?"

He frowned slightly, registering perplexity. "They are all right here—and at home—so long as it is a *youth* program. For the rest of it—the program of the church—they seem to have no interest."

"Are you referring, perhaps, to the preaching service?"

"No!" His answer was quick and decisive. "It's bigger than that. I mean the *complete* church program—from business to play, from worship to teaching; from organization to administration, from membership to service. Get the idea?"

"Y-y-yes, perhaps——"

It is a rather common criticism, with enough truth in it to make it sting a little, and there may be no use in trying to find the reasons, except as they might guide toward achieving among young people what is so very desirable—an active interest in the total program of the church.

Let me say immediately that the church must not expect too much from any *growing* group. Life expands its interests only with multiplying years. Childhood, for instance, can hardly grasp the meaning of the word "total," for childhood is the time of fractions of things. From adolescence we may expect larger things but not without remembering that these undulating years are much occupied with exploring the new world born inside of life during the teens. That is so important and thrilling that other interests hold only shadowy lure. Youth serves first the world growing in its own heart.

Perhaps, too, we need to confess that the efforts of the church have not always been in the direction of youth. Records tell us that for long years the church relegated adolescence to the sidelines, and the tradition still lingers. It cannot be pushed aside with a wave of the hand. It cannot be changed by a wish.

Lying still deeper is the fact that modern youth is being taught by public education to interpret whatever larger interests it does have in terms of world politics and economics. Five days looking at a world materially rather overawes the presentation of the world religiously a few hours a week.

But all of this does not help us in our need. As a background, however, it must not be forgotten. Against it, there may be some values in the following constructive suggestions:

1. *Give youth a creative share in the whole program of the church.* We have not done much along that line except as we have used young people *after* the program was made by adults, forgetting that greater interest attaches to creation than to mere participation. It has been suggested that the young people of a church, assigned in rotation to the various boards of that church, could help to project, plan and create the total program, so that when a year has rolled around every one of them has received some training in every department of the work. Such rotation will have the additional advantage (over longer term assignments) of meeting the as yet unstabilized emotional interests of youth.

2. *Secure youth GROUP action on a total church program.* In most Protestant churches now, young people who are members are invited and expected to attend the congregational meetings and are given the right to vote. As it works out, however, it is largely the customary adult group who have "always" looked after the business of the church. These come and vote—and youth is conspicuous by its absence. This is due doubtlessly, in large measure, to a sense of futility youth has in the matter. In a mixed group of adults and youth (witness any discussion group of mixed ages) it is generally the adults with their larger experience and their greater verbal fluency who are "front and center," and young people feel reluctant to thrust their inexperience into the scene.

Therefore, it would seem preferable to bring a congregational matter first to the youth group as such—to the church school department, a youth organization, or some other unit representing the total youth group of the church assembled. Under right guidance a youth group *will* take hold and discuss freely with concrete suggestions. I recall rather vividly a situation where the congregation was called upon to pay off a note by a certain date under threat of having the church doors closed. The elderly folk grappled with the problem as usual, and also as usual complained that the youth were taking no interest in the matter, even though it was their church, too! One of the younger members of the church board, a businessman selling insurance, said little, but on the following Sunday morning, he appeared by prearrangement, in the Young People's Department. Class sessions were suspended for the occasion, and with a big black-

board as "first aid" he showed them in a businessman's crisp, friendly way the story of the church finances. He "sold" them church as he sells life insurance. He frankly asked their advice and criticisms. He got both. Just by themselves, under his leadership, those young people took hold. They worked out a set of "recommendations" to the congregation, and a spokesman for them. To the next congregational meeting, they came *en masse,* supporting their spokesman and their own ideas. The church doors did not close. Neither did the elderly folk ever criticize their youth again.

3. *Select the right adult leaders.* The foregoing experience bears witness to this need. The right adult is not always the willing adult. "We don't have a counselor. We don't want any. We get along better by ourselves." That was a solid chorus of protest against some adults they had known—and had not loved! Adults who had been willing to supervise the dear young people. It was not kind for the young folks to be so outspoken, but it has not been kind of the church, either, to have been so indifferent in the selection of leadership.

Normally, young people are not antagonistic to adult help and guidance. They sense the need of it and are willing to co-operate and to follow. But . . . .

Here is not the time to enumerate the usual "qualifications" of a leader of youth. Suffice it to say that in this field as in any other there are "naturals"—people who fit exactly, and the fitting defies description. It is the same policy, merely in reverse, of the old couplet:

> "I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.
> The reason why, I cannot tell.
> I only know and know full well,
> I do not like thee, Doctor Fell."

Some leaders make good and some don't. So what! Find a natural young people's leader, plus training that does not make him unnatural and you will have a leader who takes youth with him to the heights. Personality? Yes, decidedly. Strong will, without the iron claw? Of course. A joyous Christianity that is never silly? Yes. Having said that much—where are we? It is the church's task to find an adult leadership whom youth will claim and whom they will not surrender. Such a leader will bring youth into the whole program of the church—perhaps with a flare of trumpets, but he will bring them!

4. *A better distribution of program accent or emphasis.* It is part of human nature to put its best foot forward; that is, to talk in public about its *strongest* point! So it comes about that many churches proclaim (from their steeples, if any) the virtues of their "Youth Program." Visitors are cordially invited to the "wonderful vespers of our youth group." In late years the church has yielded much to the temptation to dramatize its youth work with robes and candles and candlelighters; with processionals and rituals and with elaborate names for its youth program. All of this has impressed the young people favorably and magnified their own sense of importance. In fact, the rest of the church sometimes suffers by comparison. Why shouldn't young people feel theirs to be the most important work when on it lies the accent of the church, when they receive a considerable share of the budget, and the impressive publicity?

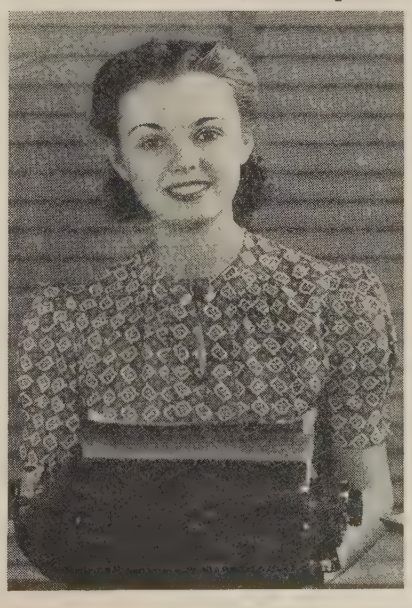
If the church wants a total interest it must give a total emphasis, and the level of it dare not be monotonously low—but thrillingly high.

5. *Assign a section of the total church program to the youth department.* That is, a section of work in addition to that youth program itself. One church took a step in that direction experimentally by forming teams of one adult and one young person for the Every-Member Canvass. That youth group became much interested in church finances and had considerable "fun" exchanging experiences afterward! Another church had assigned all *special programs* (including Children's Day) to their youth department. Thereby every age group and interest of the church came under the administration of the young people during the year.

Quite a number of churches have made their young people responsible for the church's weekly bulletin. To succeed, any of these demand careful shepherding by some more mature leader whose tact is an iridescent jewel, whose patience is boundless as the universe, and whose appreciation is deep as the sea.

6. *Provide a better demonstration of the potential power of Christianity through the established church members.* The discouraging thing about the church, to many young people, is the distance that so often stretches between their ideal and the example set by many older church folks. That is, of course, almost trite. How tragic that it *is* trite. It is so well known, so freely admitted—and so consistently ignored. This leakage, of course, has drained tremendously the vitality of the church in any community.

H. Armstrong Roberts



Young people like a team that can play hard—and *win* the game. Youth's songs are always of victory, never of defeat. Their words may be crude, their language vociferous, their concepts at times silly, but the note of victory sounds through it all—and always does so. But they sing these songs and make these noises about their athletic teams, or their class units, but not about their church. For youth is not seeing the church carrying forward its work victoriously. The church is divided against itself. Team work is rare. Money for church is hard to get. Money for anything else comes comparatively easy. Community wrongs remain wrong despite generations of church folk. The world starts fighting whenever it pleases regardless of the voice of the church. Youth instinctively does not rouse itself to that which talks power and shows weakness. They probably will be no better adults than we have been. And why should they? We set no thrilling examples of courage or power or faith, save as now and then some lone star rides the sky.

If we could swing ourselves into *Christian Action* and demonstrate the power inherent in the holy "body" of the church, young people might really become interested in its "total program."

"It's a great bunch," said my elderly friend. "If we could only get them interested in the whole program——"

He is so right. But the challenge is not so much to them, the young, as to us, the elderly friends.

EDUCATION

"If we work upon marble, it will perish. But if we work upon immortal souls, we engrave upon those tablets something which no time can obliterate, and which will brighten and heighten through all eternity." In Christian education we are concerned not merely with "work upon immortal souls," but with the character of the engraving itself. We are seeking to carve upon the minds and hearts of the boys and girls of this generation such truths and ideals that our leaders of tomorrow may have "the mind of Christ," and may be guided by his spirit. In such men and women the hope of the world is to be found.

—Frank W. Padelford

Getting Attention FOR Department Members

By JENNIE E. STEWART

A DEPARTMENT superintendent reports her plan for insuring many little attentions for lonely, shut-in church members, without much work for anyone.

She made out a card for each member —giving name, address, telephone number, birthday, and other information valuable to an interested friend. Then at the left of the card she wrote a list of four or five services one might do for this member if one were so disposed. Among these were personal visits, telephone calls, birthday cards, reading matter, flowers in season, jellies or broths, automobile rides, material for rugs or quilt pieces, stamps for collectors, material for men members to work up, and greeting cards for special seasons.

She took these cards to the well-organized young people's class one Sunday and asked if there were any present who would offer to do some of these things right away for shut-ins. Those who raised their hands were given opportunity to draw a card from the packet.

The following Sunday the cards were returned with the particular service performed checked opposite the name. Several weeks later she took the packet of cards to another class with similar results.

Everyone liked the idea and some even asked for certain names as permanent friends. When the church as a whole understood what she was trying to do, her card file became a miniature clearing-house between those needing attention and those in a position to given attention.

A NEW BOOK

THE remarkable book, *The Church of Our Fathers,* by Roland H. Bainton, contains more than the mere recital of a succession of historical facts. It compels the reader's interest because, while the author tells the story of the establishment and the development of the Christian church, he includes more than the impersonal account of the growth of an institution.

The author relates the influence of the church upon people as well as the influence of individuals upon the church. Thus, this history becomes vividly alive because, constantly, events are linked with the lives of men and women. While the reader journeys through twenty centuries of church history he makes personal acquaintances with individuals as he travels.

Loder

The author transforms an inanimate past into living history by interesting methods. He has collected fascinating drawings that were sketched during the particular phase of history under discussion. Two quaint sixteenth century pictures illustrate the account of the turmoil during the Reformation. One of these shows Luther, Calvin and the Pope pulling at each other's beards and ears; another depicts Peter struggling with the Pope in an effort to regain the key to heaven. The wealth of delightful illustrations adds to the charm of the book.

Also, the author recounts some of the strange religious legends and gay anecdotes which interested and amused the church people during the early centuries of Christianity. A sermon of the second or third century suggests that men refrain from talking when food is in the mouth; women are urged not to smear paint on their faces.

The reader discovers that many of our customs, such as calling twelve the noon hour, have their roots in church history. He also learns the derivations of many words.

Fortunately, *The Church of Our Fathers,* which offers a happy blend of enjoyable as well as sound, instructive reading, avoids the temptation of becoming involved in the battles of the Reformation. The reader may do as he wishes with the objective facts presented.

This book, written expressly for young people, will interest adults as well. In addition, it would be of excellent service for a study group in church history.

Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1941. 248 pages. Price, $2.50.

■

PLEASE order all of your books from the nearest store of The American Baptist Publication Society.

A Christmas Puzzle

By filling in each of the following blanks with the name of a well-known carol, the result will be the story of Christmas.

_____ a little babe lay, on a _____, _____ _____, _____ came and announced to them Jesus' birth.

Three Wise Men saw the star in the east and came to Bethlehem to search for Jesus.

At last, they found him in the manger and fell down to worship him, saying, _____. They presented gifts to him — gold, frankincense and myrrh.

When the Wise Men proceeded on their journey, they spoke of their experience to everyone they met, and said, _____.

(*Solution on opposite page*)

A Tested Game for Your Next Party

Off to Philadelphia

By CLEVE WILLIAMS

THE leader announces: "We're off to Philadelphia in the morning."

Turning to the left-hand player in the group circle, the leader says: "What are you going to take on the trip?"

Left-hand player says: "I'll take my handbag."

Leader goes around the circle, asking each player what he will take, and there will be a variety of answers—such as bathing suit, new hat, car, roller skates, field glasses, camera. Some will take ludicrous things. For instance, one girl said she would take her fur coat. The boy next to her said he'd take moth balls.

Now the leader says to the left-hand player: "What will you do with your handbag?" and every player has to do with his property what left-hand player does.

Left-hand player says: "I'll carry my handbag."

The answers follow like this: "I'll carry my bathing suit."

"I'll carry my new hat."

"I'll carry my car," and so on.

Then the leader asks, of the third player: "What will you do with your bathing suit?" Answers follow like this:

"I'll put on my bathing suit and go swimming."

"I'll put on my new hat and go swimming."

"I'll put on my car and go swimming."

"I'll put on my roller skates and go swimming," and so on.

Soon the leader has brought out a dozen such ludicrous statements as:

"I'll put on my moth balls and skate to Independence Hall."

"I'll focus my walking cane and take a picture of the Liberty Bell."

"I'll wheel my roller skates up to a filling station and have them oiled and gassed."

Nonsense games make a pleasant change from active contests, but they should not be played for long.

Solution to "A Christmas Puzzle"

(On opposite page)

"Away in a Manger"
"Silent Night"
"While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night"
"Angels from the Realms of Glory"
"We Three Kings of Orient Are"
"Joy to the World"

Paul's Photos

LO, WHAT WONDERS THE DAY HATH BROUGHT,
BORN OF THE SOFT AND SLUMBROUS SNOW!
—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN

For the Shepherds, a Song

(Concluded from page 36)

Leader.
Within the darkest night
When not a light illuminates our sky,
May we raise eyes that seek his Star,
And know that God is there?
Know he has sent his Son,
And men at last shall find him!
Know that the Christ
Shall lead our hearts, our souls,
Our very strength to Peace!
The Star, 'tis there behind the clouds!

Men's voices.
May we take time to seek the Christ this year.
And, finding him, bow down to worship and adore,
Even as humble shepherds did of old.

Women's voices.
May we, like Mary,
Hold close our loved ones,
And through knowing such a love
Reach out in service to thy children everywhere.

All.
It is Christmas, and we
Bring thee praise,
Thou Babe of Bethlehem.
Come thou into our very hearts,
And find a welcome home.

Leader.
It is Christmas, and for thy great gift,
We cannot thank thee, Lord, enough.
But we present our strength,
Our reverent praise,
Our quiet confidence,
And sincere love,
That all the world may
Know thy Peace,
Thy Joy supreme,
Born to our hearts, this Christmas.

HYMN, by the congregation, "Joy to the World."

BENEDICTION, by the leader.
Dear Father of us all,
We thank thee for thy Gift Divine, thy Son.
May thy Star of Hope guide us,
May angels' song of peace and good will
Be heard above the noise of hate and fear.
May we take time truly to keep this holy day, Christmas.
Amen.

"Watchman, What of the Night?"

(Concluded from page 39)

To shatter or fulfill this vision of thy white advent.
O Son of God, be thou our strength!
Hail Kingdom of the Christ!
In thy fulfillment rests our hope and faith
For the year that creeps across the midnight silent snow
Out of the annals of eternity into our annals of time.

CHOIR (No. 324, fifth stanza):
"Ring in the valiant man, and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

READER:
Grant us, O God, thy truth, thy light,
Thy gracious and redeeming love;
Grant us thy spirit, everlasting in its enduring quality;
Grant us thy will to care enough—
That somehow we might weave thy spirit
Into the tangled fabric of mankind's existence,
That somehow we might melt the values of thy eternal hills
Into the very fiber of humanity.
Grant that the year that comes tonight
Into our annals of time—
Grant that it may be fashioned to thy will,
Fashioned by the instruments we clasp
From the eternal stores of thy creative love.

CHOIR (No. 324, second stanza):
"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow.
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

BENEDICTION (by the pastor).
We turn again to the hearth, to the factory wheel, to the plough, to the office desk, to the teacher's chair, to the counter of buying and selling.
As the old year passes away and is gone,
And the new year enters, yet unfulfilled,
May the spirit of God, which is love, and the strength of God, which is courage, and the light of God, which is truth, rest with us all to fashion in intricate pattern each moment of every hour of the year that comes with the midnight. Amen.

CHIMES.

RECESSIONAL (robed choir). "The Recessional," No. 287.

MISSIONARY EDUCATION

in the Home Department

By O. G. HERBRECHT

HOME DEPARTMENT members who are shut-ins often are in danger of becoming shut-away! As their circle of activity narrows to the limits of the home, they are apt to lose the vision of the big world outside—of what is happening out there and of what that big outside world needs. Aunt Polly used to say, "The older we get the more we need the *big* things, because there's nothing so lonesome as an old age that lives only to itself."

And she was right! As we grow older we are very liable to put in more and more time thinking about ourselves, about our own troubles and our own futures. Yet we ought, instead, to be intensely interested in leaving the world better than we found it. The world! Not just our lives, our homes, our church, and our community, but the world!

Now, there are many ways by which the missionary fire may be kept alive in the hearts of Home Department members, and, indeed, through them kept burning all the brighter in the life of the church. In fact, due to the free time possessed by many Home Department members, this department offers an especially promising field for the cultivation of missionary interest.

Home Department Members Can Keep Informed

Many Home Department members daily, and for hours at a time, listen to the radio. They also read the newspapers. In these ways they keep pace with the world's wars and tragedies, but are they keeping in touch with the triumphs of the gospel? How shall they be kept informed concerning the spiritual forces that, despite the war, are still at work throughout the world? Every Home Department superintendent and visitor should give some thought to these questions, for the members of the Home Department must have up-to-date missionary information if their missionary interest is to be kept alive. Fortunately, there is no more thrilling news today than that which comes from the mission fields.

Of first importance to all who would keep abreast of missionary progress is

When planning for missionary advance do not overlook the ability and the resourcefulness of the members of the Home Department

the magazine *Missions*. It is published monthly, is illustrated, and abounds with articles rich in human interest. The price for single subscriptions is only $1.25 per year. In clubs of five or more subscribers, the price is only $1.00 per year. Home Department officers should make sure that all the members of their department have an opportunity to become acquainted with *Missions*, and to subscribe for it, if they so desire.

Many missionary publications—books, leaflets, announcements, and reports—come to the church. Care should be taken to see that these interesting pieces of missionary material reach the homes of the shut-ins. Occasionally the missionary society of the church may be able to arrange to hold one of its meetings in the home of a Home Department member, thereby bringing to that member the fellowship and enthusiasm of the group meeting. Often arrangements can be made whereby the members of the Home Department can participate in the activities of a mission study class. If unable to attend the meetings of the class, the shut-in can at least join with its members in reading the book chosen for study.

The newer mission study books, incidentally, deal with matters of major importance and were never more fascinating. Among the many of special interest to Baptists are the following: *It Began in Burma*, by Randolph L. Howard; *A Christian Imperative: Our Contribution to World Order*, by Roswell P. Barnes; *Christian Roots of Democracy in America*, by Arthur E. Holt; *Tales from Latin America*, by Frank S. Mead; *Stand by for China*, by Gordon Poteat; and *For the Healing of the Nations*, by Henry P. van Dusen.

One Home Department superintendent, by accident, discovered in her church a small stereopticon. It gave her an idea. She promptly borrowed it and as promptly sent to the Baptist State Convention office for a set of missionary slides. Then she loaded her car and made the rounds. The Home Department members were thrilled—and informed! Another church introduced the practice of taking any missionary that might be visiting it to the homes of the shut-ins, that they might get some first-hand information on what was happening on God's firing line.

It is most important that the Home Department doors be kept wide open to the inflow of missionary information and inspiration.

Home Department Members Can Share in Missionary Work

There is no reason why shut-ins should not contribute, to the limit of their ability, of themselves and of their resources to the missionary cause; they should for the sake of their own spiritual vitality, if for no other reason. Over and above whatever they may be giving to their local church and church school, they should give regularly and specifically to missionary work. Attractive contribution envelopes and cartons are available.

Many Home Department members were, in their earlier years, active workers in the church. Some of them may have had considerable experience in raising sums of money for various church causes. Perhaps they could arrange a few missionary teas to be given in the course of the year. To these teas they would invite other Home Department members, and of course, their immediate neighbors. A brief devotional period and a missionary talk should precede the refreshments. A silver offering might then be received. Such an offering often will yield a very substantial sum for missionary work.

Besides gifts of money, there can be gifts of *things*, not the castoffs usually found in the "missionary barrel," but new things that have been made—anything from scrapbooks to dresses, for use in mission hospitals, orphanages, schools, or Christian centers.

Home Department members also can render valuable service by writing letters of encouragement to the missionaries. Right now we are being urged to write to the young men in the armed services of our country. That is fine! But let us not forget the soldiers of the cross; they, too, need our cheer and encouragement, for their task today is both difficult and dangerous. Let us assure them of our wholehearted support.

Home Department Members Can Pray

In this matter, the superintendent of the department can set an example. She can pray daily for the work of Christ throughout the world. Shut-ins cannot travel to the far ends of the earth, but there is no limit to the outreach of prayer. In our prayer life we have that which can girdle the globe in complete safety—and with unerring victory. No force on land or sea, under the water or above the earth, can stop or harm the prayers that are winged by love and faith. Here is a way by which one and all can minister to the souls that sit within the shadow.

There are special days and seasons when it will be the privilege of the Home Department members to join their prayers with those of other Christians in intercession for various Christian causes. A few of the special days may be mentioned:

Week of Prayer. *First week of January.*
Race Relations Sunday. *First Sunday in February.*
World's Day of Prayer. *First Sunday in Lent.*
Christian Family Week. *First week of May.*
Rural Life Sunday. *Second Sunday in May.*
Children's Day. *First Sunday in June.*
Religious Education Week. *Last week of September.*
World's Temperance Sunday. *Last Sunday in October.*
The great holidays: *Such as Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.*

Missionary information, service, and prayer, such as has been described, will keep the Home Department members not only active but happy, because it will lead them away from introspection and circumscribed living, and out into all the world with the heroes of the cross.

■

Do Christians need missionary education? Figures show that all of the giving for missions is done by about one-third of the members of the church. Also, that the million and a half Northern Baptists give between one-fourth and one-half of a tithe for all beneficent purposes.

Home Department By-Products

By BASIL MILLER

THESE by-products are one reason why the work of the Home Department is so important."

The speaker was John Hansen, general superintendent of a church school with an active Home Department. His remark was called forth by the report that had just been made by the Home Department superintendent, Mrs. Theodore Johnson. Mrs. Johnson had concluded her report by handing over to the various supervisors the names and addresses of a number of new scholars, of some scholars who need to be visited, of prospective church members, and of several Home Department members who would soon be able to attend once more the regular sessions of the church school.

"It would be difficult to imagine operating our school without these feeders coming from our Home Department workers," Mr. Hansen continued. "May I ask, Mrs. Johnson, how many prospects you discovered this month from the nursery roll?"

"I think there were seven. But I was especially fortunate in finding prospective pupils for the Beginner and Primary Departments. There are twenty."

The teacher of an adult class spoke up. "I don't see how Mrs. Johnson has time to do all this in addition to the regular work of her department—looking after the shut-ins, taking them their literature, and receiving their contributions. I barely find time enough to look after my class, to say nothing of giving such help to other departments!"

"It really isn't difficult," Mrs. Johnson explained. "I carry a little book in which I set down the names of those who have newly moved into the community. Invariably, when making my calls, I find changes in the neighborhood. Besides, I ask my Home Department members to tell me of children who are not in Sunday school. When I am near their homes, I drop in for a visit."

"This is all very unusual," broke in a young people's teacher, "but I'm sure we all could do a great deal more to help other departments, if we were so minded."

Growing out of the discussion in that teachers and officers' meeting, here are some practical suggestions to Home Department workers:

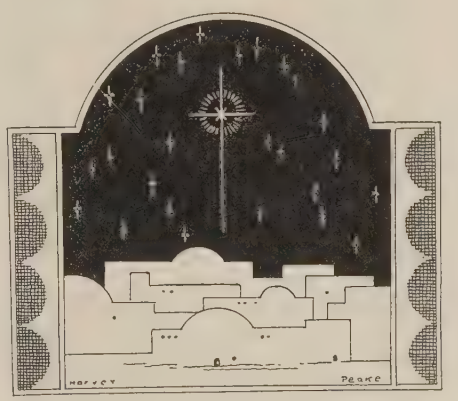
1. Check all changes of address in the neighborhood for which you are responsible. Sometimes an official in a real estate office or in the office of the local gas and electric company can tell you of families newly moved into the community. Also, you can ask those upon whom you call if there have been any newcomers on their street.

2. Carry a list of the church school members with you. You can easily check on some of the absentees. In that way you will be assisting in maintaining the attendance of the school.

3. As you call in the homes, you will learn of various ones who are sick. Report the illness at once to the proper departmental superintendent or teacher.

4. Get acquainted with *all* the members of the homes which you visit. There may be young people or small children who are not enrolled in the church school; there may be older relatives or lodgers who would appreciate an invitation to attend its sessions.

The worker who thinks only of her own department lacks an important character trait—the willingness to do teamwork. Let your objective be the good of the whole school, and feed into the school every scholar possible. Never hold in the Home Department one who should be a regular church school attendant.



Christmas All the Year

By Clarence Edwin Flynn

A little time of candles,
Some presents on a tree,
A few swift-passing carols
Seem not enough to me.
Sometimes I really wonder
If life, in every way,
Could not somehow be rendered
One endless Christmas Day.

Why not leave out the hating?
Why not give each a chance?
Why not a hand of helping
In every circumstance?
Why not a world of brothers?
Then happiness and cheer
Would be in each day's dawning,
With Christmas all the year.

International Sunday School Lessons

Theme for the Quarter; Studies in the Christian Life (Personal, Family, Church)

Aim: To help the learner achieve more effective Christian living in personal experience, in family relationships and in and through the church

These lessons are developed from outlines prepared by the Committee on Improved Uniform Lessons of the International Council. The outlines are copyrighted, 1940, by the International Council of Religious Education and are used by permission.

LESSON 10—DECEMBER 6

The Meaning of Church Membership

Acts 2:37-47; 4:13; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Colossians 3:1-17

Colossians 3: 1-17

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

KEY VERSE: *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.—1 Cor. 12: 27*

TO BE READ EACH DAY

Nov. 30. M. Uniting with the Church. Acts 10: 44-48
Dec. 1. T. Courageous Testimony. Acts 4: 5-13
Dec. 2. W. Many Members in One Body. 1 Corinthians 12: 26-31*a*
Dec. 3. T. Christ Our Life. Colossians 3: 1-4
Dec. 4. F. New Life in Christ. Colossians 3: 5-11
Dec. 5. S. Christian Behavior. Colossians 3: 12-17
Dec. 6. S. Peace and Prosperity. Psalm 122: 1-9

SCRIPTURE SAYS

By W. W. Adams

What idea comes to your mind when the word "church" is mentioned? You may think of the building on the corner, or of the congregation to which you belong. Then there is the larger group, the denomination. So we hear such phrases as "the Methodist church," "the Presbyterian church." For our own denomination, we prefer to use the plural in all such cases, and to say, "the Baptist churches." Furthermore, we often use the word "church" without regard to its geographical location or any particular group of people. In this universal sense, the word designates the entire body of Christ, all believers in Christ as Saviour and Lord. Thus we find Paul making reference, in one place, to the church at Corinth, and in another place to the church, the body of Christ. When Jesus declared that "the gates of hell" should not prevail against his church, he surely was not thinking in terms of a limited group of people, located in some small geographical area.

The different senses in which the word "church" is used need to be kept in mind in discussing the meaning of church membership. This would be especially important if we were to undertake a *full* discussion of church membership. The purpose of this lesson, however, is practical, rather than analytical and exhaustive. Moreover, the central, vital facts in the meaning of church membership hold true for each individual in his relationship both to the local group and to the entire body of believers.

We note that the word "church" is not used in our printed Scripture passage, Colossians 3: 1-17. But a little study of the passage will disclose this fact: that God, Christ, and the believer in his relationship to God, Christ, and other believers are all in the picture. So we have here all the essentials of a church, in whatever sense we care to use the word. The first part of this passage stresses the meaning of church membership from the viewpoint of the Head of the church and the individual believer's vital relationship to him. Further along, the stress is placed upon the outworking of this inner dynamic, in the believer's activities, especially as one among many believers. No richer passage could have been chosen for study in connection with a discussion of the meaning of church membership.

I. Importance of the Study

Surely no argument is needed to encourage us to give serious consideration to this matter. Just remember that among Baptists, North and South, only one church member in three does anything tangible for the church or through the church. That is to say, only one in three attends regularly any one of the regular church services, or gives financial support to the work of the church. If you

doubt the accuracy of this statement, get the statistics from our denominational headquarters. Remember also the situation in your own local church.

Ponder these words that come from as sincere and hard-working a Baptist pastor as I know: "It takes four-fifths of my energy and time to keep my own members rounded up, to keep them from arguing and fussing, to keep them moving together sufficiently to maintain the church as a living institution. How much we could do, if only they would keep themselves ready and active, so that, with their help and unfailing loyalty, I could spend all my time and energy in winning the unsaved and enlarging the work of the church in the community and in the world!"

An overstatement? At least, it is what a pastor said in my presence. Let us be realistic, let us face the facts as they are in our churches and in our own lives. The indifference of great numbers of church members would kill the church in a decade, if it did not have the undergirding of supernatural resources.

II. The Epistle to the Colossians

Paul faced a difficult situation at Colossae. Some members of that church were seeking to combine some strange philosophic concepts with the basic truths of the Christian religion. They held, of course, that God is holy and free from all evil. On the other hand, they said, all matter is evil. They maintained that God, therefore, could not come into direct contact with the earth and with man, either in the original creation of all things or in the governing and guiding of that which he had made. How then, they asked, could Jesus be divine? Certainly not in his flesh, they concluded. How then account for his supernatural life and deeds? In answer, they suggested two possibilities. Some said that Jesus was human and that Christ was supernatural. This Christ, they thought, came upon the human Jesus at his baptism, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, and left him at the cross, when he cried, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Others said that Jesus only seemed to have a body; that actually he did not. Furthermore, they argued that since all material things are sinful, even believers could not escape being sinful. They concluded that the believer might serve God in spirit, while permitting his body to engage in all kinds of sins!

Now read Paul's letter to the Colossians. Can you separate the human Jesus from the divine Christ? Is Jesus Christ one or two? Answer this in the light of his relation to all of creation (Col. 1: 9-17), and to the church (1: 18-23). Should the believer yield to his bodily desires, or should he suffer with Christ? Can even believers be misled by false teaching? And is Paul uneasy about the Colossian Christians (1: 24—2: 7)? Since matter is evil, should not believers practice asceticism—withdraw from things and people (2: 8-23)? Or, since things are evil, including our bodies, should they yield to their bodily desires, do as they dictate, and be content to serve God with their spirits; giving way to *license*, rather than to *asceticism* (3: 1-17)?

III. Union with God (Col. 3:1-4)

Paul's argument is as follows: Was your conversion genuine? In yielding to Christ as Saviour from sin, in committing yourself to him, you, in principle, in essence, died to sin and arose to a new life (Col. 2: 20). This is true because you now share Christ's risen life, his resurrection power.

You now need, however, to make that which is implicit to become practically real. Be a member of Christ's body, not nominally only, but vitally. Christ is now the exalted one; the heavenly ruler and helper. Through him all you need of divine resources is available: truth, power, inspiration, and program. But these things do not come to you automatically. Even believers must make their choice. You must will to do that which is consistent with your profession of discipleship to Christ, or you will fail as a member of his body. Take your eyes and your affections off the things of earth. Be ye all the time seeking the things that are above, thinking of them, loving them, and doing them.

Such is your privilege, your duty. For you died, once for all, to the evil to which you could give yourself by virtue of possessing a fleshly body and of living in a material world. Your life, your higher nature, your immortal, spiritual self stands hidden permanently with Christ in God. Now make that relationship and the glorious possibilities inherent in it a reality by thinking and living as God in Christ directs. By living this divine life now, you will share the glory of Christ in the consummation of the age.

IV. Death to Sin (Col. 3:5-11)

If you died with Christ, and if you are not to live by and for the things upon the earth, here is what you must do. You must "mortify [kill off once for all] therefore your members which are upon the earth." Never again let your bodies lead you to live worldly lives, to surrender to the pleasures of the flesh that contradict the will of God and that rob you of the life that is of God.

Then, after giving a list of some of the terrible sins of the flesh, he continues: Do not forget that you used to live in and practice these things. This disobedience always brings the wrath of God. Such is the teaching of God's Word, and it is borne out in history. So be done with such things forever.

Thus you will make good your Christian profession and possibility. You have laid aside, as you would an old filthy garment, the old human nature with its deeds; and you have put on the new nature that is constantly being renewed through experiential knowledge, in line with the image of the Creator. Remember that with God nothing else counts, except this growth into Christlikeness. God does not think of you or deal with you in terms of religious ceremonies you may practice. Neither is he influenced by your race or nationality, your culture, or your economic and social status (vs. 11). No, for *all*, Christ is everything—Christ made vital in all you do.

V. Alive to Righteousness (Col. 3:12-17)

It is not enough to kill off the old nature (vss. 5-11); you must "put on" the new nature. Having cleared away the debris, you must build the desired structure. You are saints—dedicated to God, and dear to him. Act accordingly.

You are to show mercy, kindness, humility, meekness; you are to be long-suffering, forbearing, forgiving. Above all, you are to manifest love, the crowning, perfecting grace of all graces. You are to live at peace with your fellowmen. You are to be thankful. You are to let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. You are to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Now, go back over these verses and make clear to yourself what it means to be a church member. Then act accordingly.

LESSON APPLIED

By Howard K. Williams

Last week we considered the business of the Christian church—what a Christian church ought to do. Today we shall discuss the meaning of membership in a Christian church. Three passages of Scripture are suggested as the basis of our study, each of which should be considered with the lesson title in mind.

What Is the Christian Church?

We use the word "church" in several ways. We come back from Europe and tell what beautiful churches we have seen, or we say our church is beautiful or ugly, or needs painting. In this sense we are talking about a building. Certain religious bodies speak of their denomination as the church, using the word to designate an organization or a certain system of beliefs which their denomination represents. Other meanings of the word we need not consider here.

1. *The church is the body of Christ.* The body as a figure of speech occurs frequently in the Bible. Think for a moment of the human body; how harmonious the whole and yet how varied the parts! Because we live with the body every day we fail to notice its wonder, until something happens to one of its members. We suffer a serious illness and then discover what a wonderful thing health is. We little think of the intricacies of the human nervous system until we stop to consider how it works. The brain sends messages through the nerves to the arm, and the arm does the brain's bidding. The eye looks upon a landscape, the nerves carry the sensation to the brain, there the scene is reproduced, and the brain sees the picture. A danger signal is flashed through the nervous system, and back goes a message to run, or call, or do something to escape or meet the emergency.

The church is the body of Christ. Christ is the head, the brain. Every member must immediately and fully obey the commands from the head, if the body is to function properly. *Think what would happen if only this would happen in every church!* How many members of the Christian church really obey Christ's orders? Is it any wonder that we have an imperfect body of Christ, deformed, misshapen, giving a wrong impression to the world, and inadequately meeting the world's needs?

2. *The church is composed of regenerated people.* The best passage on this matter is that which contains the conversation of Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3: 1-15). Nicodemus was an intelligent man, a prominent leader, and he really wanted to know about Jesus' teaching. In this passage we have a fine description of what a born-from-above person is.

Note that Nicodemus starts by saying, "We know." Who knows? Nicodemus placed himself with a certain class of people who accepted Christ as a teacher. Perhaps you say as a Baptist, "We believe in immersion," and yet it may be that you never have given the matter personal thought at all. Perhaps you say you believe in it because the Baptists believe in it. Many people whose denomination believes in christening would find difficulty in justifying the practice. They accept it because their branch of the church accepts it.

Now, a man cannot be born from above by a "class" belief in Jesus. Every man must believe for himself. Read Acts 11: 38 and see how each individual repented, and was baptized "every one." A group of Christians may believe in Jesus' redemptive power, but each person must believe for himself if he wishes to be born from above. No one can do this believing for another; each individual must believe for himself.

In effect, Jesus said to Nicodemus, "That won't do—that general acceptance of the beliefs of your social and religious group. Every man, individually, must be born of water and of the Spirit."

All talk about church membership is mere babble for me until I am born again. I do not belong unless I am born again.

I asked a lady in Norway, "Have you ever experienced Christ in your heart?" She answered, "I don't know what you mean. I pay my taxes, part of which goes to sustain the church. So I am a member."

While this conception of church membership is conspicuously true of all state churches, it is too generally true of all churches. How many people impress you as being raised together with Christ from a dead life of sin, to a living testimony for Jesus? A real church is made up of born-from-above Christians.

How To Be a Real Church Member

A study of these passages helps us to see what one must do to qualify for membership in the church. Having settled the fact that a person must be born from above, the question naturally comes to us as to Nicodemus, "How?" Jesus offers Nicodemus no intellectual explanation. He says, in essence, "The wind blows and we know it, though we know not whence nor whither. So the Spirit enters a man and old things take on new significance."

1. *Put off certain things.* In the experience of repentance one puts out of his life attitudes and practices that are un-Christlike. Through Christ's saving power, one simply leaves those things behind. Paul writes of putting to death such things as "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: . . . . put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."

Note well this list of things! Some people think that if they are not sensual or lustful they are all right. Note that Paul includes anger, wrath, malice, shameful speaking. A woman wrote me a letter asking me if I thought a divorced man had a right to be a deacon. I wondered, as I read that letter, what sort of woman she really was. There seemed to be some venom in the way she asked the question. It is possible that a lustful person may be no worse in the eyes of Christ than a mean, shameless gossip.

Note, too, that the born-from-above person puts away race antagonism. This teaching has no bearing on nonsense about intermarriage of people of different races. It pertains rather to a mutual recognition of the worth of all peoples to us and to Christ, no matter what their race.

2. *Put on certain things.* Among the things which Paul enjoins the Colossians to put on, are forbearance and forgiveness. How can one say that he belongs to Christ's body if he does not have patience and a spirit of constant forgiveness? G. Campbell Morgan once said, "A forgiven man does not strut." He remembers always that he is "a sinner saved by grace," and so he does not strut his own virtues, nor parade his fellow's sins.

He will put on a heart of compassion. "There but for the grace of God lies Gough," said John B. Gough when he saw a poor drunkard lying in the gutter. Christ's forgiveness of our sin makes us compassionate toward others in their sin—not condoning them, of course, but feeling sorry for them. A born-from-above person is kind and humble and patient because the great motive power of his living is love.

A minister was talking with a cab driver in Belfast. The driver, like many laymen in England and Scotland, was also a lay preacher. "Do you see that corner, sir?" he asked. "I stand on that corner on Sunday afternoon and preach. Do you know the verse? John 3: 16. That's what I most often preach. It's the most wonderful verse in the world. If you believe it, you are all right."

The cab driver was right. It takes a real belief in this verse to make one a born-from-above person — one who alone can truly belong to the church of Jesus. The bond that binds Christians together is love — love which comes from God, love which man extends to his fellows. This is the real meaning of church membership—a fellowship of Christian love.

The Evidence of Church Membership

"By their fruits ye shall know them," said Jesus. Surely that is reasonable and fair. Would one be inclined to think that a tree bearing apples was an oak tree? Would one be inclined to think that a so-called church member who bore sour, gossipy, selfish works and words really belonged to Christ's body?

So Paul says: (1) "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Not the peace of a stagnant pool, or a stagnant conscience, but the peace of God. The peace which God gives is peace indeed. (2) "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Not what others do, or say is right to do; not a verse here and there that suits our fancy and does not interfere with us too much; but a rich possession of the word of Christ dwelling in our hearts and finding expression in all that we do and say.

VIEWPOINT OF YOUTH

By Clarence W. Cranford

Stating the Case

To thousands of church members church membership does not mean all that it should. In many cases the fault lies back at the point where they were admitted into the church. They were not then made sufficiently aware of what church membership ought to mean. In many Baptist churches, one merely presents himself in response to the "invitation" following the sermon, is accepted on faith, and then and there voted into membership. Little effort is made to find out if the person is ready to come into membership, and almost nothing is done to instruct him in the meaning of church membership. In other churches, where applicants for membership are required to meet the board of deacons prior to being received into full membership, the meeting is often all too perfunctory, and the person is not impressed with what is expected of him as a church member. More and more, however, churches are offering some course of instruction for those who present themselves for membership.

Developing the Idea

Certainly everyone is agreed that membership in a Baptist church rests, primarily, on a personal commitment to Christ as Lord and Saviour. Paul writes in Colossians 1: 18, "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: . . . . that in all things he might have the preeminence." A church member, then, must first of all be a Christian—one who voluntarily and gladly gives Christ the pre-eminence in his life. In respect to this requirement there are three levels of Christians. First, there are those who give Christ a place in their lives. They make up the largest group. Second, there are those who give Christ a large place in their lives. And, third, there are those who give Christ the first place in their lives. There can be no doubt as to which of those three groups Christ would have us belong.

Having chosen Christ (or having been chosen by him), there is one outstanding reason for joining the church. That is in order that working with others, we can do for the Lord what he wants done in the world—work that we could not possibly do as individuals working alone. Jesus gave us the Great Commission, but no one person can carry it out by himself. But by joining with others who want to do the Lord's will, and by combining our resources, we can send missionaries to the ends of the earth.

If people would only get that fundamental idea! We don't join a church merely to please the minister, or because we like the fellowship of a certain group; we join a church to serve the Lord. A man dropped into the office of his church in Atlanta to tell the pastor that he was going to Washington for a while to do work for the government. "Of course, you will want to take your letter," the pastor suggested. "No," he replied, "I may be there only six months or a year." "But," said the pastor, "you don't know but that those six months may be the last you'll ever have to serve your Lord in this world, and unless you take your letter, you'll just drift around and not mean as much as you ought, either to any church in Washington or to this church. Find a church in Washington and send for your letter. When you come back again, it will be just as easy to bring your letter back as it was to take it to some other church."

To make church membership mean what it should, we must do something in and for the church. In one Baptist church, a certain deacon can always be relied upon to ask the same question of those who seek membership there. "What do you expect to *do* in this church?" That is a good question. If one of the four who helped to carry the sick man to Jesus had failed to do his part, the man might never have been brought to Jesus. It takes all of us doing our part to make the church function in the world.

Finally, let us remember the church of Christ will not fail. Churches may fail. But not the church of Christ. A missionary back from Burma said, "It would break our hearts not to be able to go back, for that's our home. But whether we go back or not makes no difference. The church is in the hearts of those we've won for Christ. It will not fail."

Applying the Lesson

By using a little imagination, some plan can be worked out to stimulate thought on this important matter of what it means to belong to a Christian church. One class member might pretend to be a person recently converted to the Christian faith. He sees why he should follow Christ in his personal life, but claims not to see why he should join the church. Let the rest of the class think of reasons he should join.

Discussing the Problem

1. What is the difference between the church and the churches?
2. What plan could your church follow to instruct new members? What does it do?
3. If you were instructing new church members, what would you tell them?

SCHOOL AT WORSHIP

By Glenn H. Asquith

THEME. "I Belong!"

PRELUDE. Selections from "Impromptu in A Flat," op. 142, Franz Schubert; or the hymn tune, "Hendon."

INVOCATION.

HYMN. "O for a Closer Walk with God."

SCRIPTURE. 1 Corinthians 1: 1-10.

PRAYER. The leader may call for a moment of silent meditation, after which he may pray for universal peace and brotherhood.

RESPONSIVE READING.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"Now are we the sons of God."

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

"Now are we the sons of God."

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (Rom. 8: 14-15, 17 and 1 John 1: 3.)

HYMN RESPONSE. "Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me," or "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

"What's that odd-shaped piece of metal you have there?" Bill inquired of his neighbor, Jim Brown.

"I don't just know, Bill, but I think it belongs on my car somewhere. I'm going to make a thorough search. After all, this pin is no good unless it is in the place where it belongs. It was made for some special purpose."

"There is something to that. By the way, Jim, don't you belong to First Church?"

"Sure, I belong there. And so did my father, and his father before him. Why?"

"Well, I always see you puttering around your yard on Sunday at church-time."

"And why not? That doesn't affect my membership. I make an annual donation."

"You think that is enough, Bill? You have just said that that pin in your hand will be no good unless it is fitted into the place for which it was made."

"I guess you're right. What time is it, Bill? Ten o'clock? If you'll wait a few minutes I'll walk down to church with you."

HYMN. "O Jesus, I Have Promised," or "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus."

BENEDICTION.

POSTLUDE. "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

LESSON 11—DECEMBER 13

The Value of the Church to the Social Order

Matthew 5: 13-16; Mark 12: 13-17; Luke 6:27-38; Acts 8:4-8; Romans 13:1-10; 1 Peter 2:13-17

Matthew 5: 13-16

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Mark 12: 13-17

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.

16 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

1 Peter 2: 13-17

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

KEY VERSE: *Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . . Ye are the light of the world.—Matt. 5: 13-14*

TO BE READ EACH DAY

Dec. 7. M. Salt and Light. Matthew 5: 13-16
Dec. 8. T. Good Citizenship. Mark 12: 13-17
Dec. 9. W. The Golden Rule. Luke 6: 27-31
Dec. 10. T. Community Uplift. Acts 8: 4-8
Dec. 11. F. Patriotism and Piety. Romans 13: 1-7
Dec. 12. S. The Law of Love. Romans 13: 8-10
Dec. 13. S. The Love of Law. Psalm 119: 97-104

SCRIPTURE SAYS

By W. W. Adams

In our last lesson attention was called to the meaning of church membership. Life in the church has three focal points: first, Christ, the Head, the source of all spiritual life; second, the individual in relation to Christ; and third, the individual in relation to all other individuals that make up the body of Christ. The Scripture passage studied last Sunday dealt only with those three phases of church life. But by implication we were made aware of the larger world setting in which the individual believer lives his life. The sins that the individual is to avoid and the graces he is to possess and express, involve also the individual's contacts with persons outside the church.

Our lesson today advances to the point of calling attention to the church in relation to society. What value does the church have to the social order?

One thing should be made plain: there is nothing for anyone to fear in the phrase, "the social order." Its meaning for each individual, including each Christian individual, is exceedingly great. Man cannot live to himself. He belongs to a creation, to a world order, of which there is only one Creator. That fact itself binds him to creation as a whole. He was put here, not one person alone, but one person in relation to all other persons, and to creation as a whole. He cannot escape his relationship to world order of which he is a part.

Again, man was made in God's image. The essentials of God's very nature, as a person, are stamped upon man's nature. God is sociable in his nature. We bear that imprint in our own souls. In consciousness we wake up to this fact. It is something given. The only decision we can make is whether we shall live up to God's expectations for us, in meeting our social responsibilities and privileges.

The word "social" comes from a Latin word that means "to follow." Now, that calls for more than one person. It introduces us to the *socius*—to society, to the group, the community. "The social order," therefore, calls attention to the fact that our existence on earth is wrought out in relations with others who make up our group. Now, what value may we as members of Christ's church be to the people who make up society as a whole? We of the church are only some of God's creatures. He is interested in *all* men. So should we be. So shall we be, if we are truly Christian.

The church has many values with reference to the social order. The printed Scripture passages, taken from three New Testament books, give us some of these values.

I. In Saving from Death (Matt. 5:13-16)

Jesus' greatness as a teacher is evident in these verses. He was speaking what we call the Sermon on the Mount. His audience, for the most part, was composed of Galileans. No one in that audience was ignorant of the meaning and value of *salt* and *light*. Jesus took these two metaphors and used them with telling effect.

Jesus had made clear the nature of his kingdom in what we call the Beatitudes (Matt. 5: 1-12). His kingdom is primarily set to the task of blessing all people who qualify as subjects; all those who bring their inner, spiritual lives into conformity to the nature and laws of the kingdom. But being members of the kingdom does something more than bring blessings to the individuals. It places them under obligation to all men outside the kingdom. It identifies them with God's purpose to reach all men with his grace.

"Ye are the salt of the earth." No, it is not that you are *like* salt. You *are* the salt. Now, there has never been agreement as to exactly what Jesus meant by this expression. For salt has many properties and serves many purposes.

Surely this much is clear. Salt saves from corruption and decay. It preserves. It makes tasty and pleasant that which otherwise would not be so. Every fisherman in Galilee, every household manager, knew that. Now carry the thought over into the realm of persons. Consider all the forces that destroy human values, that render life meaningless and valueless, and that defeat the divine purpose in creating life. Now, Jesus, explains, you who are my followers are to the peoples of earth what salt is to that with which it is used; and if you fail to function, all will be lost. Men will perish and you will be judged and condemned for your failure.

Again, "Ye are the light of the world." No, it is not that you control or manipulate the light; turn it on or off. You *are* the light. To be Christian is to be the light of men. We have no choice in that matter. Our only decision is as to what we shall do with the light. Shall we let it function as it is intended it should? This is the truth Jesus seeks to drive home. In the world of Jesus' day, the only light to guide late travelers at night was the light of towns and cities. A light in a city on a hill can be seen. It cannot be hid. Then go into a home. There is the oil lamp, and the lampstand. How foolish to put the lighted lamp under a bushel! That would defeat the purpose of light. Rather, you put the lamp upon the stand and it gives light to all in the home.

Now, are you putting your light up where men can see? Stop and think. Then follow Jesus' thought in one of his great imperatives: "Let your light so shine before [in the face of] men, that they may see your good works." How do you let your light shine? By the *good works* you do. Men see your light as they gaze upon your good works. Now, will you answer these questions: What are those good works, as planned by Jesus? How many of them can be wrought out by going to church? by the sermon? by individuals working alone? only by groups? Would you be willing to read your Bible through in seeking to answer the question, "What are the good works God intends his people to engage in, by which their light is to shine?" I know of no group of Christians who are ready to face this question fully, with their Bibles open.

And what is the purpose? Neither to glorify you, nor your church, nor your doctrines, but your heavenly Father. That is, if you will function as salt and as light, you will save man from death; you will give life a meaning; you will bring man to recognize and to glorify God.

Let your light shine *before* men. Countless thousands of men are not in churches. To obey this imperative, we shall have to go where men are. Otherwise, our light remains hidden and men will not glorify God.

II. In Saving Men from Oppression (Mark 12:13-17)

Read these verses. Certain Jewish leaders wished to catch Jesus in some utterance. They had a scheme. They would first flatter Jesus. "We know you are fearless," they would say, "and that you teach the truth without favor. Tell us, is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?" That was a question loaded with dynamite. Caesar and the Roman people held the Jews in political and economic slavery. The Jews chafed under this order. It was a clever question, for if Jesus said that it was lawful to pay tribute, his hearers would report to their fellow-Jews that Jesus was on the side of the Romans. If he said it was not lawful, they would interpret this to the Romans as an act of treason: Jesus would be a rebel. But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. He asked for a Roman coin. Facing with them the marks of Roman authority upon the coin, he said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." God rules you directly in some matters; you in turn, render certain services to him. In other matters God's purpose for society is realized through the state. Now, be loyal to both.

Thus Jesus forever blasted the idea that the state can rule men in all things. No, render to God the things that belong to him. But for this great principle, and the respect it forces us to give to the individual conscience in its relation to God, wicked men working through state governments would oppress men according as they wished. Thus the church, through loyalty to God's ultimate claim upon the individual, saves society from oppression from wicked rulers.

III. In Saving Men from Ignorance (1 Pet. 2: 13-17)

What silly interpretations are often given to these verses! "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man." Whatever the state tells you to do, do it! Do not use your conscience or your judgment; obey your government blindly! But we catch Peter himself violating that injunction (Acts 4: 19-20). Moreover, we forget an important matter. The early Christians faced a real temptation. Learning that Christ is the supreme ruler, and since it is difficult to meet the demands of worldly rulers, it was easy for them to conclude that they, as Christians, should withdraw from society and take no interest in the affairs of state. This attitude led to serious consequences. Unbelievers accused the Christians, who met secretly, of all sorts of sins and of being disobedient to the state. Thus the believers brought the name of Christ into disrepute. Peter counsels these people to be wise. He would have them be citizens, be co-operative. They were not to use their freedom for doing wrong, but in being God's servants. They were to honor all men, including their rulers. Thus they would stop the foolish talk of ignorant men. In short, they would save men from their ignorance, and unto God.

LESSON APPLIED

By Howard K. Williams

"What is it for?" If we are in doubt about any sort of instrument or organization or meeting, one of the first things we ask is, "What is it for?" We have discussed this question in the lesson on the mission of the church. Now we are to discuss the value of the church in our present social order. We have in the passages before us what Jesus taught relative to the value of the church in society.

The Church Is Salt

Though the church was not really formed when Jesus spoke these words, he was talking to the individuals who later formed it. Certainly no church can be what its members are not. The individual members make the church what it is, so that if all members are salt the church will be salt.

With his characteristic happiness in the use of metaphor, Jesus told the early Christians they were salt. Three important things can be said about salt.

1. *Salt savors.* "What is the matter with this food?" someone asks. "Oh, I forgot to put salt on it," comes the answer. How important salt is in making food savory—in giving it taste!

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see,"

runs an old gospel hymn, and is it not true that Jesus gives us zest for living?

George Fox tells us that when he finally found Christ, the grass was greener, the flowers more brilliant, and the songs of the birds were sweeter.

Now every Christian should be able to give a similar testimony. I know Christians whose presence makes life seem worth while, and I know others who make one feel that nothing matters. Right now I am thinking of a shut-in who has been bedfast for many years. She is blind, and so deaf that it is only with greatest effort that you can make her understand. Yet her face actually shines with joy. She rejoices in Christ

her Saviour. She loves life, though she has little of what we call life. She is totally unlike the person who has about everything this world has to offer and so little of Christ—so very little that that person takes away one's zest for living.

The church should make life savory, tasteful, desirable. Any other sort of church or individual Christian really has no place in life. "It is good only to be trodden under foot of men."

2. *Salt preserves.* Many of our foodstuffs are treated with salt. On visiting a fishing village I saw long racks of codfish glistening in the sun as the salt crystallized on the fish, and I knew that salt would make it possible for people far away and in months to come to enjoy codfish who otherwise might never taste it.

The church should be like salt, the great saving influence in society. And so it is. Almost all, if not all, the uplifting influences in society today can be traced to the Christian church. Time was when weak babies and older people were exposed to the elements to die. Today, through the influence of the church, hospitals follow in the path of the Great Physician; for hospitals first originated under church auspices. Old people were left to die uncared for; the church instituted homes for the aged. Heathen peoples who had no hope in this world or for a world to come, have received the message of Jesus through the church as its members have gone to all nations in obedience to Christ's command.

Schools originated in the church, and all the first colleges of America were founded under church auspices. Too, the ideals of democracy, including the overthrow of slavery, came in the wake of the church's teaching about the love of people for one another. As salt saves food, so does the church save society. We have a great job on our hands as members of the Christian church. There is no hope for the world save the message which it has to offer. Christ alone saves.

3. *The salt must be dissolved.* The salt may be chemically all right, but it will not serve its purpose until it is dissolved. It must come into contact with the food and be dissolved by the food before it can give savor, or preserve the food. Even so the church. A church may have perfect doctrine, beautiful buildings, elaborate ritual, faultless creeds, and yet be useless so far as the social order is concerned. Jesus was moved with compassion on the multitude; he was "melted" by the need of people.

How are you affected by the need of people in their misery and sin and want? "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" A great Christian layman came to me one bright Sunday morning and, with quivering lip, said, "As I came to church I passed a group of young boys gambling in the streets. What can we do to get them into the church?" He gave his life and died helping, because he acted as the salt of the earth. And you, who see boys and girls and older people living without God in the world, what do you do about it? "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, ..." Christians can be of use in saving the world and making life seem worth while only as they truly enter into life with the compassion of Jesus.

The Church Is Light

Recently I read a magazine article by a man who had lost his power of vision. He was in the field hoeing potatoes. Then something went wrong. He took off his glasses and blinked. The green and white of his house blended into each other, and finally all light went out and he lived in physical darkness. Some parts of our country are practicing blackouts. Used to lighted roads and streets and houses and headlights, we went about not even thinking of light. Now we are forced to think of the difference between light and darkness.

The article referred to above tells how the man had to learn to get about, and how in time he found that he could do very well.

Before we can overcome the handicap of spiritual darkness the light of Christ must shine in our hearts. When everything goes along easily and we have plenty of everything, we seem to get along very well. But in time of loss, of sickness and trouble, many of us do not get on very well—not unless the light of the Eternal is in our hearts.

"Why do you worship a Christ of the cross, while I get along very well worshiping a laughing Buddha?" asked a young Buddhist of Charles A. Wells. Mr. Wells said it was not until later that he could give a good answer. A coolie fell in the road through weakness and consumption. The Buddhist shrugged his shoulders and proceeded to get another coolie to serve him; but Mr. Wells lifted the coolie up and he died in his arms, to the astonishment of the young Buddhist. "I know the answer now," said Wells. "Life is not always a laughing matter and the worshiper of a laughing Buddha omits an important part of human experience."

Christ is the light of the world. He throws light on life's experiences, *all* of them, and lights up the particular part of the road we are traveling, as the headlights of an automobile light a section of the highway before it—little by little until we safely reach our destination.

A light shines. Shining is what makes it a light. If we do not shine, we are not light. The world needs the light of Christ, and it will have it in proportion as we reflect it in our lives. We ought to shine so that people can see our Father in heaven. Jesus illumined the face of God and showed us the great Creator as our loving Father. *A light is not to look at, but to see by.* We are not to shine that men may see us and say how bright we are. We are to shine so that people can see the way to God.

The Church and Individuals

This is an extremely selfish world. How thoughtless people are of others! They push others around, run them off the road, run them down with gossip, oppress them, cheat them, steal from them.

Over against these worldly attitudes and practices is Jesus' direction to Christians. How different from the world's philosophy! "Love your enemies." Imagine that! "Do good to them which hate you." The whole philosophy of this passage (Luke 6: 27-38) is opposite to that of the world, and the whole object of it is that we may be like the heavenly Father.

The Church and the State

In Romans 13: 1-10 and 1 Peter 2: 13-17 attention is called to the attitude of the Christian, and so the attitude of the Christian church, toward the state. In the question put to him concerning tribute money, Jesus clearly taught the duty of paying taxes. When a state is properly run, we get more for our money paid in taxes than in many other forms of spending. We get police and fire protection, streets and highways, public schools, sanitation, and numerous other services. It is lamentable, of course, that some unprincipled men in public office engage in various forms of graft and thus increase taxes; but even that condition does not excuse a citizen from paying taxes. In every way that his conscience will direct, a Christian should be a law-abiding citizen.

VIEWPOINT OF YOUTH

By Clarence W. Cranford

Stating the Case

"If Christianity ends with the individual, it ends." So one writer declares. Certainly we would all agree that Christianity begins with the individual. But even Jesus did not want it to stop there. In talking with Peter, Jesus gave him what might almost be called the acid test of devotion. His question to Peter was, "Peter, do you love me?" And when Peter assured him that he did, Jesus said, "Feed my sheep," as if to say, "Here is a way you can always prove it." We demonstrate our love for Jesus in what we do for the sake of those he

would help and win. One cannot read the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew and come to any other conclusion.

Developing the Idea

Our primary concern, then, is the individual. But the individual cannot be considered totally apart from the world in which he lives. Someone has said that "to live is to be in relations." We cannot live in a vacuum. Inevitably, we are affected by the forces that are around us every day. As Dr. Fosdick has so clearly expressed it, "To talk of redeeming personality while one is careless of the social environments which ruin personality; to talk of building Christlike character while one is complacent about an economic system that is definitely organized about the idea of selfish profit; to praise Christian ideals while one is blind to the inevitable urgency with which they insist on getting themselves expressed in social programs—all this is vanity." Now, this is not mere guesswork. Again and again, it has been shown that better housing has improved moral conditions, and Christian social welfare work has reduced the crime rate in many localities.

We owe it to the individual, then, to try to bring about a social environment in which he finds encouragement to live a better life, and where Christians will not have to compromise their convictions in order to hold their jobs, as frequently happens. Thus the church has the responsibility of keeping the larger application of Christ's principles in mind even while it strives to win men one by one to a personal commitment to Christ.

This is no new idea we are discussing. The church has long used means to make a better world by ministering to the minds and bodies of men as well as their souls. Education is universally accepted today as a part of our national life. But education in this country is a child of the church. Children were first taught to read so that they could read the Bible. The first New England Primer was published quite as much to teach theology as the alphabet. Children were taught that *A* stood for "Adam," and were taught to say, "In Adam's fall we sinned all," and so on through the alphabet to *Z*, which stood for "Zacchaeus he, did climb a tree, the Lord to see." Yale, Harvard, Brown, and most of the other early universities in this country were established by churches, the original purpose being to maintain an educated ministry.

China had an ethical religion for centuries, but it was Christianity that first took hospitals to China — and started them here. Think of how much social welfare today is exactly what the church has contended for all along. The church *is* ministering to city, state, and world.

Finally, let us recognize that the Christian missionary enterprise is the church's program for helping the world. Henry Pitt Van Dusen started on a trip around the world frankly skeptical of the work missionaries are doing. He thought of them as a well-meaning but fanatical lot. However, after visiting scores of missions in dozens of countries and islands, and after seeing not only the churches they had built but the schools, hospitals, and welfare agencies they had established, he came back to write *For the Healing of the Nations*, in which he confesses to a complete conversion to the idea that Christian missionaries are doing the most important, the most needed, the most *intelligent* piece of work that is being done in the world today.

So we are not discussing a hazy theory. We are discussing something that is happening throughout the world today. Our job is to see that we have a part in the church's total program for the world.

Applying the Lesson

List the statements of Jesus that offer comfort and those that contain a challenge. Is there any contradiction between the two? List a number of things in the community against which the church should create a body of public opinion, and where it might show some militant action. Discuss these frankly and thoroughly.

Discussing the Problem

What can your church do to make yours a better community?

Does the fact that the church is so divided hinder its program for bringing about better conditions in the world?

Does playground space in crowded areas have anything to do with character building? Is this a concern of the church?

SCHOOL AT WORSHIP

By Glenn H. Asquith

THEME. "Discovering the Church."

PRELUDE. Hymn tune, "Wesley."

CALL TO WORSHIP. "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." (Psalm 34: 3.)

INVOCATION. This house is but empty, unless thou dost fill it with thy holy Presence, and our hearts likewise are bare and desolate unless thou dost dwell in them. Therefore, be in our midst, Lord, this day and evermore. Amen.

OPENING SENTENCE. "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16: 19).

HYMN. "Lord of Light, Whose Name Outshineth," or "Brightly Gleams Our Banner."

PRAYER. The Lord's Prayer arranged as follows. (If a quartet or chorus is available to sing the responses, the effectiveness will be increased.)

"Our Father, who art in heaven:"

One stanza: "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

"Hallowed be thy name."

One stanza: "Holy, Holy, Holy."

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

One stanza: "My Jesus, as Thou Wilt."

"Give us this day our daily bread."

One stanza: "Lord, for Tomorrow and Its Needs."

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

One stanza: "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling."

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

One stanza: "Yield Not to Temptation."

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

One stanza: "Come, Thou Almighty King." (The "Amen" to be sung.)

MEDITATION ON THE THEME.

If we were but given the eyes to see, we might look at a church building and behold more than usually meets the casual glance. We might see golden ribbons of the church's influence stretching out into all walks of life.

One ribbon would lead us to the neighboring hospital, founded as a result of the church's teaching, "Heal the sick."

Another ribbon would take us to an orphanage, established at the instance of the church, "Visit the fatherless and the afflicted."

Yet another ribbon would take us to a business place, where customers are not in fear of being cheated, since the church has laid stress on "a just weight, and a right measure."

And still another ribbon would go as far as the state capital. It would reach the men deliberating on new laws and remind them that, "Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord."

Another might guide us to an art gallery where we would find that the noblest paintings are those portraying events in the life of Christ.

And if we had time, and our second sight remained, we might follow still other ribbons to their ends in social welfare work, in schools and colleges, in asylums and prisons, and in the homes of the nation.

In so observing we should have discovered the church as it really is.

HYMN. "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken," or "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life."

BENEDICTION.

POSTLUDE. "The Church's One Foundation."

LESSON 12—DECEMBER 20

The Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-20

Luke 2: 8-20

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

KEY VERSE: *Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.—Matt. 1: 21*

TO BE READ EACH DAY

Dec. 14. M. Gabriel's Announcement to Mary. Luke 1: 26-33, 38
Dec. 15. T. The Birth in Bethlehem. Luke 2: 1-7
Dec. 16. W. The Angels and the Shepherds. Luke 2: 8-14
Dec. 17. T. The Shepherds and the Child. Luke 2: 15-20
Dec. 18. F. The Word Was God. John 1: 1-13
Dec. 19. S. The Word Made Flesh. John 1: 14-18
Dec. 20. S. Song of the Virgin Mother. Luke 1: 46-55

SCRIPTURE SAYS

By W. W. Adams

We have come again to the Christmas season. The story of the birth of Jesus and of the beginning of Christianity again fills our minds. In many ways during these days we shall be reminded of the *facts* of Christmas. Practically all of life is affected at this time of the year in some way or other by the approach of Christmas. But it is a different matter with respect to the basic *significance* of Christmas. One wonders what percentage of the people who are aware of the facts of Christmas stop long enough to consider and to appreciate the real meaning of that event!

Could any contrast be greater than that between the message and spirit of this passage of Scripture and the conditions now existing in the world? For, prominent in this story are the words "glory," "joy," "peace," "praise," and "good will." Can we bring these two contrasting scenes together in a way that will help? One feels at this point that something needs to be done beyond simply retelling this beautiful story.

It *is* a beautiful story. It grips our imaginations. To retell and to ponder it seems to bind us close to the centuries that have gone by since those events occurred; and to draw us closer also to the untold millions of peoples who have loved this story and have found in it new resources for smiling and trying again. Let us once again live the scenes as pictured by Luke, and then pass on to other considerations.

I. The Story (Luke 2:8-20)

1. *The Shepherds (vs. 8).* To get the setting of these events, read the preceding verses. The geographical area referred to is Bethlehem and vicinity. Bethlehem was the city of David. It seems clear that David was born there, and there he grew to manhood. In the fields near by he had tended his flocks. Many of the great promises and hopes of Israel centered in David. Now, at Bethlehem, a great event had come to pass. And other stirring events were soon to follow.

Some shepherds were out in the fields near Bethlehem, watching over their flock by night. During the hours of the day shepherds did not have to be so careful with their flocks. But at night close watch was necessary to prevent loss from prowling wild animals.

2. *The Angel (vss. 9-12).* Let us picture this scene. "The angel of the Lord came upon them." Literally, "came near, close by." Such is the Greek. With the angel came the glory of the Lord. This glory shone round about them, encircled them. What this glory was, how it looked and was made manifest, we cannot tell. The effect upon the shepherds was natural. "They were sore afraid." Literally, "They feared a great fear."

Then the angel spoke. Let us note the message in detail.

a) "Fear not." Literally, "Quit being afraid."

b) The basis of this appeal: Christ the Lord, the Saviour, is born this day in the city of David. This is the good news of great joy I now bring to you. And not to you only: it is for all people.

c) The sign. You will be able to find the new born king by looking for a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

3. *The Angels (vss. 13-14).* A large company of heavenly visitors suddenly joined with the first angel. The first angel had stood *near* the shepherds. The company of angels came and stood *with* the first angel. All were thus close by the shepherds, not high up overhead, as artists have sometimes pictured them. They were "praising God." They also proclaimed a message of great importance. Now, the exact statement of that message is not clear. The Greek manuscripts from which our translation is made do not agree at this point. The best manuscripts present the message of the angels in two parts:

a) Glory to God in the highest.

b) And on earth peace among men of good will.

Taken together the two lines give a complete thought. They show what the birth of Jesus means both to the Father and to men.

4. *The Confirmation (vss. 15-17).* The shepherds found themselves alone once again. They soon resolved to go to Bethlehem to confirm the announcement just

made, for they recognized that it was from the Lord. They lost no time in the journey to Bethlehem. "They came with haste." We do not know how long they searched, but they found Mary, Joseph, and the babe. After looking upon the Christ child, they repeated to Mary and Joseph, and perhaps to many others, the message they had received from the angels.

5. *Some Results (vss. 18-20).* Several are mentioned.

a) Wonder. Amazement filled the minds of all who heard.

b) Reflection. Others could talk. Mary had too much to think about to permit her to talk freely of those things. She kept in her heart all that had happened since the angel first had announced to her the facts regarding the son to be born to her. She kept pondering them—casting them this way and that way in her heart, thinking them through.

c) Rejoicing. The shepherds returned to their flocks. As they did so, they kept on glorifying and praising God. Their rejoicing was inspired by what they had seen and heard.

Such is this incomparable story. Is it not enough just to retell this story and let it rest there? Would that it were!

II. The Problem

As we look at the Christmas story again, certain questions arise. If all of us who love and believe the facts here related would be perfectly frank with ourselves and others, we might be able to render a good service to all concerned. The questions to be faced are three.

1. Is the story of Jesus' birth true to fact? Was Jesus born as Luke says he was? Upon what do we base our answer? Is our answer dictated by our philosophy? That is to say, do our ideas of God, of the world, and of life prepare us to accept readily the record of Jesus' birth? Or, on the other hand, do they make it difficult, or even impossible, for us to accept the biblical story of Jesus' birth? The record of Jesus' birth came into being independent of and apart from our philosophies. Our philosophies, however, have much to do with our reaction to that record. But philosophy, be it favorable or unfavorable to the biblical claims for Jesus, does not have the last word in this matter.

Can we not get our answer solely from history? The record of Jesus' birth is in our Bible. Is that not sufficient? For many people, it is. But for others, equally sincere and devout, this is not sufficient. These will contrast Luke with Matthew, the only two New Testament writers who relate the supernatural birth of Jesus. And they will conclude that Matthew and Luke cannot be correlated or harmonized. Mark does not narrate the birth of Jesus at all. John only hints at it. Paul, at best, only assumes or implies it. Endless have been and will be the discussions of this matter as based on the New Testament records. Valuable as these discussions are, the last word will not come at this point.

But from the days of Paul until now the church as a whole has accepted as true this story of Jesus' birth. Is not this sufficient? No! For, important though this witness is, it still is not enough.

2. Of what value to us is the fact of Jesus' birth? Suppose he was born just as the Bible reports, of what value is it to us? That birth was accompanied by ideas of peace, glory, joy, good will, salvation. Now look at our world—a world that stands in almost complete contrast to the message of the angels! And that after nineteen centuries! Is not Jesus therefore a failure? Has not the world evidence of his inability to convert promises and hopes into realities? Can we longer justify the effort to turn people's minds and hopes back to Jesus? Let each one answer these questions frankly.

And then still other questions. Have we really given Jesus the test he asks of us? Have not everyone and everything else except Jesus failed? Has not Jesus proved a million times over that he can meet man's needs, all of them, in all areas of life? Does not what he has done for humanity, as individuals and as groups, prove that no task is too great for him? Is not the failure first with the followers of Christ, and then with those who will not seek to follow him at all? Does not the contrast between our world today and the small world known at the time of Jesus' birth make it all the more imperative that we turn to Jesus now with new faith and fresh hope?

3. May we not expect that in the near future great numbers of people will turn to Jesus as Saviour and Lord? Will not the baptism of suffering and tragedy, now sweeping the earth, automatically turn the masses to God? It is sheer folly to rest our confidence in a great revival of Christianity upon the fact of man's extremities and disillusionments. Neither the Bible nor history will justify such a hope. Nor will a study of the present world scene. When the Renaissance and the Reformation broke the authority over the people of both the state and the church, men were set on the long journey in quest of another authority. From that day until today, individualism, humanism, and secularism, though checked or retarded temporarily here and there, have made steady advance. Today Europe and Asia hold armies of people who recognize no authority except the will of some human king. And in America, secularism is increasing. Look at our Sunday. Look inside some of our strongest universities and see them teaching that we must rebuild our Western civilization without the supernatural. Do you want proof of this? I can give it to you. No, men are not, as a matter of course, turning to God.

III. The Solution

The above questions and reflections are recorded to provoke thought and discussion. Now, at this Christmas season, is a good time to do more than sing our Christmas carols and to exchange cards, gifts, and good wishes.

Stay by the New Testament records. They can help greatly in meeting the questions we face as Christians. And so also with the history of the Christian church.

But this above all else. If the story of Jesus' birth is true, then God has become incarnate; deity is joined with humanity. The resources of the supernatural are available to us in Jesus Christ. These resources, made operative in the minds and deeds of Christ's followers, can lift us above all other men—in thought, in holiness, in deeds, and in achievements for good. Here, ultimately, is the answer to all our questions, the solution to our one great problem. What, then, does this Christmas mean to me?

LESSON APPLIED

By Howard K. Williams

This year Christmas will be different. From many homes sons and fathers have gone to serve their country, many to distant lands. Hearts will be heavy because of the carnage now going on all over the world. Christmas this year will be subdued, overcast, filled with what Riley would call "sad sweetness." And yet the real Christmas should mean more than in recent years, because the Christmas fact and message are exactly what this war-wrecked world needs most. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The Christmas Facts

1. *The Word became flesh.* In teaching this lesson the teacher should be familiar with the two accounts of the Nativity and their sequence as given in Matthew and in Luke. He should know also the hope of Israel as foretold in prophecy. However beautiful we may consider these passages—and they are surpassingly beautiful—we should not lose sight for a moment that we are dealing with a *fact,* something that actually happened. In the birth of Jesus, the Eternal God showed his face; the Word "became flesh, and dwelt among

us." So through the process that we call the incarnation, God entered human life in the life of his Son. Thus the first great Christmas fact is that Jesus is the Son of God. He brought God down to man, and gave his life that he might lift man up to God.

2. *God makes the wrath of men to praise him.* Men may devise all sorts of evil and seem to win, but they really do not win after all. Two evil factors enter into this picture, but God used both of them for good.

Caesar Augustus, emperor of Rome, with all the pomp of earthly power, ordered a census to be taken of all his empire for the purpose of a general taxation. Because of this decree Joseph and Mary, of Nazareth, went to Bethlehem to enroll.

So the acts of men were used of God to fulfill the prophecy that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem. This fact might well be kept in mind today when evil forces seem to dominate the world. God will work them out somehow—for his glory and for man's good. Even now we can see some good results in China because of the invasion of the Japanese—results which the Japanese did not intend. The war has consolidated China, and has awakened the people to their great strength and to the value of their resources. It has brought into power a great Christian leader, and has demonstrated the value of the Christian missionary. We may be sure that as we keep faith with God, he will make even the wrath of men to work out for us the highest good.

The Christmas Message

1. *Good news.* Did you ever say to yourself on starting the day, "I wish the postman would bring me some good news this morning"? We have much bad news today; daily newspapers carry flashing headlines of bad news; weekly papers and magazines bring summaries of bad news; indeed, of bad news there seems to be no end.

This condition was true also of the first Christmas season. The shepherds heard bad news from Caesar, from Herod, and from the tax collectors. They heard bad news even about the priests and the Temple worship. Then one fateful night a strange light was seen in the heavens, and they heard a reassuring voice, saying, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Good news! How strange that must have seemed, and yet that is the sort of news God always has for us, if only we will but receive it. Many of us are weighed down by the going of our boys. Others, who are not immediately affected, share the grief of those who are. Yet from our griefs we should rise to know that God offers us good news. The trouble with our world is that men have been too slow to receive it.

2. *Banish fear.* "Preach a sermon on fear! Everybody is afraid of something," said a person to me. What are *you* afraid of? Are you afraid of poverty, of loss of love, of death or of what? And why are you afraid? A Christian's security is in God. He need not fear.

The angel of Bethlehem told us *why* we need not fear. "Unto us is born . . . . a Saviour." A Saviour is one who saves, and when we are saved we need not fear the thing from which we have been saved. A person who has been rescued from drowning and is now safely on shore, need not fear. Jesus saves us from the fear of sin and sorrow and death because he provided a way of escape.

Jesus is the promised Saviour—the Christ. He is also an adequate Saviour. He is the Lord. As Saviour and Lord he demands the complete allegiance of our lives. If we are his disciples in deed as well as in name, that allegiance we will freely and fully give.

Hence the message of Christmas is that in this dark world we are not afraid, because we have a Saviour who is adequate to all our needs. He is *within our reach.* A child may reach out to touch the moon, but finds it cannot. Yet our hearts reach up to touch God and we find that he is within our reach—even in our midst—because he came close to us in the life of his Son. Then, too, this Saviour brings the message of God's good will to men. Said the leper to Jesus, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Mark 1:40). He did not doubt Christ's power, but he was not sure of his willingness. Christmas tells us that God is not only able but willing to save us even unto the uttermost.

Here, then, is the heart of the Christmas message: Let us not be afraid because we have a dependable Saviour, sent by a dependable God—one who is able and willing to save us even unto the uttermost. How the world, the nations, the churches, individuals, need this Saviour this Christmas!

The Christmas Reception

1. *"No room in the inn."* We do not have to be overly sentimental to make a point of this. As a matter of fact, it was not at all exceptional for travelers to sleep in the stalls used for animals. On cold nights some even preferred it. I have seen some of these ancient inns, among them the Good Samaritan Inn, which is a good example. Situated on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, it is a square enclosure, with a gate on one side for entrance. It has an open court, and around the sides are places for people and animals.

When Joseph and Mary reached Bethlehem, the town was filled with people; homes were crowded; the inn was full. Mary and Joseph, along with many others, had to find a place for the night in the section where the animals were housed. There was no discrimination against them; they simply were crowded out.

I wonder if that is not the greatest sin of so-called Christians today. We talk about Christ and the church, how important they are, but we are very, very busy! We must make a living; we have our friendships to keep up; we must have some recreation; we would really like to give Christ more space and time in our lives, but there is no room. Most of us have not done any great harm to anyone. We have just been so full of other things that Christ has been crowded out of our lives.

2. *"Let us now go."* Suppose the shepherds had not gone! Today a doctor told me over the telephone, "Your sermon last Sunday night should be spread by the people who heard it. How much we need that truth!" I said, "Yes, but most of them won't even think about it again." The text was, "Set thine house in order for thou shalt die" (2 Kings 20:1). But we think, "Oh, this can't happen to me—at least not now!" The shepherds might have said, "Strange! We wonder if it's so!" But they said, "Let us now go . . . . and see." It is our loss when we fail to respond to the Christ who has come into our midst.

3. *"They made known abroad."* They not only made their new experience their own, but proceeded immediately to spread the news to others. This is the only hope of the world—the spreading of the good news of Christ's gospel as men and women who have felt its power in their lives tell others their story. "Come" and "go" are the two great words of the gospel of Jesus. We must obey them both in order to be Christians in the full sense of the word.

4. *"But Mary pondered."* She had a great deal to ponder. The first chapter of Luke tells us what was in her mind and on her heart. As we read it we are led to ponder, too.

Let Christmas this year challenge us to serious thought. Hard as it may be to realize in our war-torn earth, we have a Saviour who has overcome the world. Then let us rejoice in him, that his peace may dwell in our hearts.

VIEWPOINT OF YOUTH

By Clarence W. Cranford

Stating the Case

If Jesus had not been born! What an appalling thought! Not to have had the example of his life, not to have had the guidance of his teachings, not to have had the certainty of redemption that his

gospel has made available these two thousand years! But Jesus came. He lived. He taught. "Never man spake like this man." He suffered. He died. He arose. He lives again. We can cross out the word "if." He *has* come! "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). That is our message. And while we do not yet see all the world brought to his feet, yet we know to whom we must turn for the way of life. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." As the author of Hebrews states it, "We see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus." (Heb. 2:8-9). And to see him is to want the whole world to know and follow him.

Developing the Idea

Yes, Jesus came. He is still, as one man puts it, "the leader of the column of progress." And yet the world rejects him still. Men turn deaf ears to his teachings. War sears the earth. Man's hand is raised against his brother. Again men glorify "the will to kill." Many who profess to love Christ are indifferent to his demands for their lives and for his cause in the world. Many reject him because they doubt that his way will work; others because they lack the courage to try to work it. E. Stanley Jones says of the Sermon on the Mount that we in the West ask, "Will it work?" while many in the East ask, "Will you work it?" And while we hesitate, the world suffers in agony for lack of what Christ has to give. Yet we have faith to believe these things will not always be. "We see Jesus," and he will yet win the victory.

Our problem, then, is not what we would do if he had not come, but what we will do with him now that he has come. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead tells the amusing story, but one which has considerable point, of a preacher who was preaching in Hyde Park, London, shortly before the war. At one point he was interrupted by a dirty-faced ruffian in the crowd, who yelled out, "Aw, go on! Christianity has been in the world two thousand years, and yet look at the state of things." To which the preacher calmly replied, "Yes, brother, and water has been in the world more than two million years, yet look at the state of your face."

It is not enough to know that Christ has come. We must learn to love him, choose to follow him, and, above all, strive to emulate him. It is not enough to know that Christianity is in the world. We must try to make it work.

In John 18:37, Pilate puts the question to Jesus, "Art thou a king then?" And Jesus' answer is: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate's only concern was whether Jesus had ambitions to set himself up as a temporal king. It was his duty to see that no movement might rise among the Jews that would threaten revolt against the authority of Rome. Pilate only knew kings and rulers in the Roman sense of the word. He himself was placed in authority in Palestine by Rome because he was ruthless enough to maintain order. His methods were totalitarian. His way of getting allegiance was to force it. He achieved submission of will by threat of violence to the body. Before him stood a new kind of king—one who also demands unquestioned allegiance from his subjects, but one who works from the inside out. He wins men's hearts and then receives the glad service of their minds and hands and feet. His throne is in the heart.

Some years ago, when Kagawa was in this country, a student said to him, "Why talk about Christianity? Christianity has failed." Kagawa's answer was, "Mine hasn't!" That is our answer to a world in sin. Many will say that Christ has failed. But he has not failed so long as we can say, "Christ has come, and he hasn't failed me."

Applying the Lesson

An effective means of presenting truth is the use of contrasts. As Henry Pitt Van Dusen has done in *For the Healing of the Nations*, one can present the contrast between countries where Christ has not yet come—that is, where the gospel has not yet been carried—and countries where Christianity has tended to lift the level of life. One could present the contrast between superstition and faith; between lack of social concern and Christian social conscience. In other words, here is an opportunity to show what Christ does for the individual and society when he comes.

Discussing the Problem

Is Dr. Elwood right (*The World's Need of Christ*) in saying that the hope for the world is to get back to the teachings of Jesus? Why?

Wherein is America better because of the part Christianity has played in its life?

SCHOOL AT WORSHIP

By Glenn H. Asquith

THEME. "For God so loved the world."

PRELUDE. Parts of the Triumphal March in "Aida," Verdi; or "The Heavens Are Telling."

OPENING SENTENCE. (*In unison.*) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

INVOCATION. O God of life and light and love, shed abroad in our hearts the grace of our Lord Jesus, that we may with joy fittingly prepare ourselves for the celebration of this coming Christmas day. *Amen.*

HYMN. "Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come."

CHRISTMAS LESSON. Isaiah 11:1-12. (May be read responsively.)

FIRST GROUP OF CAROLS.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem."

"While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night."

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear."

PRAYERS.

Thanksgiving for the Gift of Gifts, the Son of God.

For the coming of lasting peace, through the Prince of Peace.

For a true brotherhood of all men, co-operating unselfishly for the good of all.

For a new understanding and appreciation of the Incarnation, and a new dedication of ourselves to Him who came to be our Saviour and Lord.

PRAYER RESPONSE.

"As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led by Thee." *Amen.*

SECOND GROUP OF CAROLS.

"The First Noël."

"O Come, All Ye Faithful."

"Silent Night."

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

Last Christmas Day a flight of bombers was returning to the home base. Upon a sudden impulse the pilots in these planes opened their radios and began to exchange Christmas greetings. Returning from a mission of death-dealing, a mission which had left devastated towns on Christmas Eve, the bombardiers felt an overpowering urge to sing of the Prince of Peace and of his will for men.

Here we have a concrete example of an apparently insoluble contradiction in the souls of men. We make wars, we struggle for power and pre-eminence and wealth, we weary ourselves with the things of this world; yet we will not banish from our hopes the message of Christmas. Shall it always be thus?

Or is the insoluble contradiction an apparent one only? Will it not be solved if we yield our hearts to the Saviour? Therein lies the road out of our despair; therein is the motive of all worthy effort.

HYMN. "Light of the World, We Hail Thee."

BENEDICTION.

POSTLUDE. The Prelude selection continued.

LESSON 13—DECEMBER 27

Dynamic Christian Living

Acts 6:8-15; Romans 12:1-3, 9-21

Romans 12: 1-3, 9-21

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

KEY VERSE: *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—Rom. 12: 21*

TO BE READ EACH DAY

Dec. 21. M. Living Sacrifices. Romans 12: 1-3
Dec. 22. T. Love of the Brethren. Romans 12: 9-16
Dec. 23. W. Overcoming Evil with Good. Romans 12: 17-21
Dec. 24. T. Wisdom in a Virile Life. James 3: 13-18
Dec. 25. F. "Think on These Things." Philippians 4: 4-8
Dec. 26. S. The Life of Faith. Hebrews 12: 1-2
Dec. 27. S. A Dynamic Christian. 2 Timothy 4: 1-8

SCRIPTURE SAYS

By W. W. Adams

We recall that in October we began a series of studies of the Christian life. That theme, of course, is inexhaustible. In a real sense every one of our lessons, all of our Bible, interprets some phase of the Christian life. During these three months we have looked at this life from two points of view: first, its source, and second, its outworking in various relationships in life. We now come to the concluding lesson in this series, and no finer selection of Scripture could have been made than the one chosen for study.

As we look at this passage, let us remember several important facts. Death is manifested everywhere. This is unnatural, and contrary to every consideration of the ultimate meaning of our existence. Death is the antithesis to life. We can make room in a reasonable scheme of things for physical death that comes about naturally. The Bible, history, and our own human experiences enable us to interpret death, in this sense, in terms of ultimate good. But now we see death abroad in our world in manifestations that can have no necessary place in any rational interpretation of our world order. Who can estimate the potential good that is now perishing on the fields of battle the world over? For with the destruction of material resources in vast quantities and with the death of millions of our young men, there must come also the frustration, if not the defeat, of many of the loftiest and most holy purposes of our hearts, our homes, our schools, and our churches.

There is no way to get around this tragic act. Whatever hope we have for the future, whatever hope we have in God's ability to turn man's sins and losses to his praise eventually, this fact remains: this is the hour of death, this is the hour of the powers of darkness. Moreover, every resource and purpose of God, if we know him at all (and we do), is set for the overthrowing of death. The last enemy to be overcome is death. Death shall be conquered. If Christ has any significance at all for man, any warrant for calling for man's faith and allegiance, it rests upon his ability and willingness to overcome death through his giving of life to man. And this is not something that concerns the future only. Christ's resurrection from death unto life lies in the past. It was the result of the working of the almighty and eternal Spirit of God. Pentecost, too, lies in the past. It is not something merely promised. It is history's Number One promise come true. The might of God the Father, then, is put within our reach, through our faith in Jesus Christ.

The harvest of death, now in evidence across the face of the earth, is therefore not the will of God. Neither is it in accordance with the program and power of God. Nor is it necessary to the redemption of humanity. We, the disciples of Christ, must suffer *with* Christ, as he redeems man. This is a far different matter from millions of peoples perishing *without* Christ.

I. The Dynamic

Dynamic living is life that has power, dynamite, in it. It is life that flows out, expressing itself dynamically, vitally. It has in it the quality of power, of energy that saves, sweetens, and transforms. Life to be thus expressed must have this quality at its center and in its constitution. The inflow and the outflow must correspond.

Christ knew this to be true. His ministry was based upon this principle. That is why he did more than the prophets had done—more than simply detailing man's duties. Jesus set himself to the task of releasing in the hearts of men a new dynamic, an adequate motivation. His life, his ministry, and his death were designed to bring this to pass. Christ, therefore, offers to man both the dynamic for action and the program to which he is to give himself. All the New Testament writers caught this fact and conformed their ministries to it. This has been in evidence in most of the Scrip-

tures we have studied during these three months. It finds an excellent illustration in the Book of Romans.

"I beseech you therefore," begins Paul in this twelfth chapter. The arresting word is "therefore." It is a pivotal word. You will find it used scores of times in the New Testament. In general, this is what it seeks to say: "Reader, what I have already said in itself is incomplete. It but prepares the way for what is to follow. It demands what is to follow. If you know what has already been said, you can now follow through to the end. If not, stop and look back, before going on."

It is always interesting, in any context, to try to discover how much of the preceding discussion is gathered up by this word. In Romans 12: 1 there is no debate on this score. The word points to the whole of the first eleven chapters. There is not space here to review that content, except in brief summary. In Christ, God has made possible every man's redemption. Man is now in position to do the will of God in righteousness. All men, Jews and Gentiles alike, have sinned (1: 8—3: 20). Faith is basic (3: 21-31), and is illustrated in Abraham (chap. 4). The results are marvelous to contemplate. Peace and joy (5: 1-11); adequate, abundant grace (5: 12-21); sanctification, holiness of life (chaps. 6—8) and redemption are now available to Jew and Gentile (chaps. 9—11). In short, God in Christ is our dynamic, and he is sufficient. It is all done now, except *our* part. The groundwork has been laid in our conversion. We are now in position to live dynamically.

But the dynamic Christian life will not follow as a matter of course. There is nothing given in our conversion that thrusts us out automatically into a life of holiness. In conversion the essentials in holy living are given. It is all there in principle, in potentialities; but we must will to do the will of God. Such is the significance of the great section, Romans, chapters 12 to 16. It is Paul's noble effort to direct and encourage the believers to live righteous lives, to erect the building now made possible upon the foundation, Jesus Christ. I challenge any student to read Romans, chapters 1 to 11, at one sitting, to grasp anew the dynamic of Christian living; then to read Romans, chapters 12 to 16, to get the detailed description of life, in its various vital aspects and relationships, as it is to be lived in the dynamic of Jesus Christ.

II. Dynamic Christian Living (Rom. 12:1-3, 9-21)

There is no need of subdividing our Scripture passage, except into its separate directions for life. And they are many.

Present your bodies a living sacrifice. For this, the dynamic, the resource, the enablement, is "the mercies of God." You must present your bodies; it is to be a voluntary, not an enforced, offering. It is to be a living, not a dead, sacrifice. It is offered to God, and it must be well-pleasing, acceptable. It is to be a reasonable, a rational service; one which you gladly and freely give, in response to what God has done for you.

Test or prove God's will for you. It is "good," "acceptable," "perfect." But you must prove it to be so. This requires a new mind, "the renewing of your mind," an inner, spiritual transformation, the new birth. To effect such a change will require all that God and the individual can do. You, on your part, must will not to fashion or pattern your life after the standard set by this age. Rather, you must be transformed, transfigured: you must come into possession of a new nature.

Now we come to some samples of this transformation, this change of mind.

Be done with pride, conceit, egotism, the sense of self-sufficiency. Do not be insane, intoxicated; think soberly. Let your thought of yourself conform to your faith, as given to you of God. God has endowed each one with gifts, including faith by which these gifts are to be used. These gifts give you a place in God's great program; you have work to do. Think and live, therefore, in line with your position and task.

Verses 4-8 are not printed in our text, but get the connection by reading them carefully.

Let your love be genuine, not pretended, hypercritical. (Cf. Jas. 2: 15-17; 1 John 3: 16-18.)

Abhor the evil. Have no desire, no affinity, for it.

Give yourselves unreservedly to the good. Unite with, glue or weld yourselves to, the good.

Be kindly affectioned. With a natural affection, love one another with a brotherly love. Have a tender, genuine, mutual love.

In business be alert, speedy; not slow, hesitant. (Note that this is good Christianity, and is germane to a living, acceptable sacrifice.)

Fervent in spirit. Boiling, hot, ardent in your spirit.

Serving the Lord. Always slaves, doing the Lord's will.

Rejoicing continually, not spasmodically; and doing so in hope of still better things.

Patient in tribulation. When under pressure, in distress or affliction, be patient, remain under, stay where you belong; do not "blow up" or quit.

In prayer, be constant. Pour all your energy and power into prayer.

As to the needs of the saints, constantly share with them, that there may be equality in the means available for meeting the basic needs of life.

Be hospitable. Pursue, as in the chase, the love of strangers; show fondness for strangers, not for those of your own group merely.

Never curse at all. Never imprecate evil or doom upon others; rather, bless, speak well of even your enemies.

Share people's joys and sorrows; never as a formality, but out of a genuine concern for them.

Think together; hold all in high esteem. Do not make distinctions. Be humble, never conceited.

Never pay back evil for evil; rise above the Mosaic law of retaliation. (Cf. Matt. 5: 39).

Take forethought of the good, before all men. Be on time in these things and show no distinctions.

So far as you are concerned, be at peace with all men. Let all you do be designed to bring this to pass.

As to your enemy, do not take vengeance into your own hands; leave that to God; he will establish justice. On your part, be always ready to serve your enemy in food or in drink. Thus you may awaken him, make him anxious, ready to repent. Otherwise you will be letting evil master you, when your task is to master evil.

Dynamic living! Ponder these imperatives with your eyes upon your home, your church, and on society in general today.

LESSON APPLIED

By Howard K. Williams

What Is a Dynamic Christian?

The dictionary has this enlightening quotation under the word "dynamic": "strictly speaking all quiescent electricity is static, and all electricity in motion is dynamic." The contrast here is between "standing still" and "in motion." Applied to our topic for today this contrast is suggestive of two kinds of Christians—dynamic, moving, active living Christians, and static Christians who retard the message and meaning of Christianity by standing still. A dynamic Christian is a *living* Christian, and a living Christian is a *dynamic, moving* Christian. All the year we have been studying about Christ and the Christian life. It is a fitting climax for the year's lesson to consider Christian living in the practical walks of life.

An Example of Dynamic Christian Living

Read Acts 6: 8-15 in the light of the subject of this lesson. The passage is about Stephen, who had been chosen a

deacon because he was a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit.

This inner fortification of soul brought faith into his life as an active thing, and faith brought power. So we have in Stephen a perfect example of our lesson topic. From this study we should learn how to acquire such a life ourselves.

1. *"Full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."* A little water in a boiler is not powerful, nor is a little steam. The operator must wait for pressure in the boiler before he can do anything or go anywhere with the machine. It must be full of steam. Jesus often has to say to us, "O ye of little faith." And a little faith really is not much good. Certainly it is not a moving faith. Then, too, many of us are like a group of first-century Christians, who, on being asked if they had received the Holy Ghost, said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost" (Acts 19: 2). No wonder there are not more dynamic Christians. Christians are not dynamic until they are full of faith and the Holy Ghost, any more than a locomotive can pull a load of cars until its boiler is full of steam and power.

2. *"The wisdom and the spirit."* A living Christian will always encounter opposition. Do not ever expect to become active in the Lord's work without encountering opposition of some sort. The important thing is not the fact of opposition but our reaction to it. I have seen men become enraged when opposed. It was said of Phillips Brooks, however, that you never knew his real greatness until you opposed him. Then the wisdom and the kindly spirit revealed the heart of the man.

"It is easy enough to be happy
When life goes along like a song,
But the man worth while
Is the man who can smile,
When everything goes dead wrong."

When the opposition began to heckle Stephen, he talked with them in such a way that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

How many church fights would be avoided if all Christian workers were like that! How much more pleasant official board meetings would be if all church officers were like Stephen!

But the opposition went further with Stephen. They lied about him. That is about the hardest thing a person has to bear. Certain traders lied about James Evans, missionary to the Great Northwest, because they feared his teaching would hurt their nefarious practices. They lied so assiduously that he was recalled to England and it was a long time before his innocency was believed. Yet through it all he kept his faith and went on unshaken. So did Stephen, and the marks of his opponents' hatred became a chisel in the hand of the Divine Sculptor, so that as they looked at Stephen they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

I have seen a good face become surly because the person could not stand opposition. Not the opposition but the way we react is the important thing—the thing that makes or mars the angel within us.

A dynamic Christian knows how to take opposition. In the closing moments of this year, it would pay us all to settle all differences between ourselves and our fellow-men, and start the new year "with malice toward none, with charity for all."

How To Become Dynamic Christians

1. *Acceptable to God.* In the Temple worship the offering, whether sheep or goat or dove, had to be acceptable to the priest. On that basis unjust practices developed, as one can easily see. Many a man, poor and rich alike, suffered at the hands of unfaithful priests. But the acceptableness of our offering to God does not rest upon any man or any office. In the twelfth chapter of Romans, Paul, with characteristic clarity, gives us the requirements of an acceptable offering to God—an offering which lies at the basis of Christian living.

It must be a sacrifice. What is a sacrifice to God? Not something we give up, though we often must do that to make a sacrifice to God. It is something we give to God, something we set apart for him. When we lay aside our first tenth for the Lord's work, we should do it with the thought and prayer in mind, "Here is some money I have set aside for God!" The thought should not be, "Look what I have given up in order to give this!"

Now, a dynamic Christian should make his body a sacrifice to God. The Hebrews brought doves and goats and sheep and offered them to God. Christ does not want that kind of offering. He wants our lives—living, healthy, full of life. He wants us to set ourselves aside for him. If someone suggests that his requirements are too exacting, then let that person remember that, after all, we owe all to Christ, and that in setting ourselves aside for him we attain a higher plane of living than in any other way.

2. *Transformed, not conformed.* I have heard some people refer to earnest Christians as bigoted, narrow-minded persons. We are so only as we are *not* Christians. The less Christian we are the more constricted our horizons are. When a person's mind is transformed through Christ, his horizons expand in proportion to the transformation effected. The early disciples lived by a little sea in a little land. Hemmed in by the hills and their daily toil, they were restricted to the routine of life. Then Jesus came, and they saw regions beyond as fields of service. "Go," he said "into all the world!" They saw God's care in Jesus' teaching about the flowers of the field and the birds of the heavens. As their horizons expanded and their appreciations developed they were able, as Shakespeare has suggested, to find

". . . . tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

When Christ transforms a man's mind he makes a *big* man. Look at William Carey, David Livingstone, Robert Moffatt, Robert Morrison, Adoniram Judson, Wilfred Grenfell! A girl, alone in the world, gave nine-tenths of her income to Christ. She was in touch with missionaries whom she supported. When she came home at night she found mail with foreign stamps from her missionary friends. She visited the homes of the sick and needy. Some of her workmates spent all their money on themselves and lived in a little selfish world. Which was the narrow-minded? "Be not conformed to this world . . . . be ye transformed."

3. *Harmony with others.* No Christian can live the most effective life alone. He must work with others. If he wishes to live a dynamic Christian life he must live in harmony with his fellow-men. A life that disregards the rights and the needs and the feelings of others is always producing friction and heat, both of which are a waste of energy. Harmony in human affairs is like oil in an automobile engine.

4. *Love without make-believe.* There are some people who are "so sweet" that one suspects their sincerity. To bend over a dirty-faced child in the street in an ostentatious manner and smile and look around to see if someone takes note of your performance, is not to express love for the child. To answer with smooth words when anger is in the heart is not to love. Love is something that must be inside before it can be shown on the outside. We must love people sincerely—without dissimulation. Jesus loved that way. He loved all kinds of people, in spite of their faults. We find it easier to love some people than others, of course, but we must be well disposed toward everyone.

5. *In life's relationships.* We must be dependable, patient, forgiving, peaceable. The sum of the whole is this: We must be good in order to overcome evil. All else is like trying to cure a cancer by the use of an external salve. The best defense against disease is perfect health. The best antidote for evil is goodness. "Is thy heart right with God?" is a good thing to settle before the clock of 1942 strikes twelve midnight.

VIEWPOINT OF YOUTH

By Clarence W. Cranford

Stating the Case

Emerson would surely have found Jesus in general agreement with his thesis that actions speak louder than words. Not that Jesus would have minimized the importance of words. He was too wise a teacher for that. But he knew that words are something like shock troops. They need to be followed up by the infantry of our actions. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, ..." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." It is the *demonstration* of love that is impressive. The cross is dynamic because on it Jesus *did* something about the sins of the world.

Paul is a great interpreter of Christ, not only because of what he believed about Jesus, but because he believed it enough to do something about it. Paul never left theology dangling in the air. He always brought it down to earth, and tied it up to some practical expression. "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6: 20). "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead . . . . even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4). The "therefores" and the "even sos" in Paul's message are vitally important. That is why we find him denouncing those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3: 5). Christianity—form or force? Paul would say, emphatically, "Force." How, then, can we know it—and show it—as a power in our lives?

Developing the Idea

In one treatment of this lesson the soul has been likened to a laboratory. Let us use another idea. In every theological seminary there are two indispensable rooms — the chapel and the classrooms. Certainly what they represent should be in every Christian life if that life is to know a dynamic kind of faith. Perhaps we should say that each soul must have three rooms—a classroom, a chapel, and a workshop.

First, the soul should have its classroom. Paul advises young Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15). If we are to glow, we must grow. "Victory through Christian growth," is the slogan Southern Baptists are using in their training program this year. That is a slogan that should know no geographical boundaries. In Washington, a group of young Christians have a study club. They get the best books on religion, and come together to consider them. For two hours, they read. Then for an hour they share and discuss what they have read. Is it any wonder they are finding religion vital? How we need to study the Bible! Christians lose ground wherever the Bible is a closed book. The soul should have its classrooms—its program for study—if it is to know dynamic Christian living.

Second, the soul should have its chapel. "Be still," said the psalmist, "and know that I am God." A certain woman's faith was so radiant that her minister went to her and asked, "What is the secret of your Christian life?" "Secret?" she said, "I don't know what you mean." "Well, how do you account for its being so vital?" the minister asked further. The woman replied, "If there is any secret, perhaps it is this. After I was married, I became so busy that my prayer life was slipping. I decided that that must not continue. I had been getting up at six-thirty. I decided to get up at six and spend the first thirty minutes in meditation and prayer. I've done that for thirty years." Said her pastor, "No wonder your Christian experience stays vital."

Third, the soul should have its workshop. Something to do — that's what Christians need to include in their program. Many persons have sought God in vain until they turned to someone in need, and in their needy brother found God. Learn of God, have fellowship with God, work for God, if your religion is to be more than form—a real force. Sometimes we fail to realize that work is one of the true blessings of life. And when it is work for God, what added blessings it has in store! For then it is work done in love, and love lightens any task, and makes of sacrifice a joy. Perhaps that is what Paul had in mind when he said, "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal. 5: 14).

Applying the Lesson

This lesson is easy to apply. Each member of the class can be challenged to check his own program, or start a program in which he makes definite plans for study, for prayer, for Christian service. And do not forget the third—personal service. That is the neglected phase in many Christian lives. Of course, this kind of program calls for discipline and dedication. But the rewards are worth all that such a program demands.

Discussing the Problem

Does your church have a library? Discuss what books ought to be in one.

Can Christian living be vital and leave out any of the principles discussed in this lesson?

What will prayer do for him who sincerely practices it?

SCHOOL AT WORSHIP

By Glenn H. Asquith

THEME. "Overturners of the World."

PRELUDE. "The Son of God Goes Forth to War."

CALL TO WORSHIP. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands."

INVOCATION. "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Amen. (Rev. 15: 4.)

HYMN OF PRAISE. "Ancient of Days, Who Sittest Throned in Glory," or "Praise the Lord: Ye Heavens Adore Him."

SCRIPTURE LESSON. Acts 4: 23-33.

HYMN. "In the Hour of Trial."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME. This part of the service may be effectively prepared by three members of the school.

1. "*Ye are the light of the world.*" Our Master has said that we are *the* light of the world, and not that we are lights to be added to a myriad of other lights. If we are *the* light, then the world cannot be illuminated unless we give it light. Paul felt the greatness of this responsibility, and he traveled tirelessly through the ancient world to shed his Christian light into all its dark corners. David Livingstone took his light to the Dark Continent. The followers of Christ today should give light to every dark cornered nook of earth.

2. "*Ye are the salt of the earth.*" Again we notice that Jesus has placed upon us the sole responsibility of giving zest and savor to life. As dust and ashes in the mouth, so are all pleasures, achievements, and ambitions taken without the salt of the Christian faith. Albert Schweitzer felt this and gave up his successful and lucrative career to help make the lives of other men happier. Ann Hasseltine Judson bore the salt to a place where men knew nothing of peace and hope. Ought we not, then, to go out into the dreary places of the earth and share that which will bring real meaning and purpose to life?

3. "*These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also*" (Acts 17: 6). What if such an item were found in every modern newspaper! It is not far-fetched to imagine that such a headline might overshadow all other news, if only every Christian knew in his own life the power of God, and willed to exercise that power. Surely the world needs to be turned upside down that unrighteousness may be overthrown and that righteousness and peace may be established.

HYMN. "Lord, We Are Able," or "God, Send Us Men."

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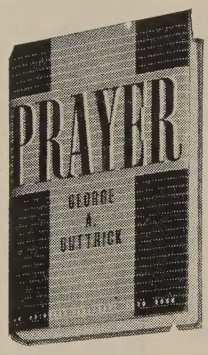

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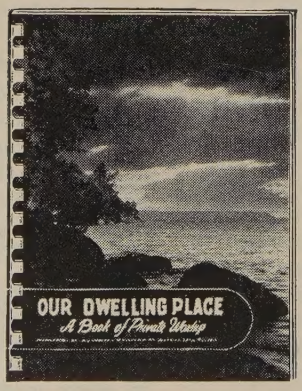

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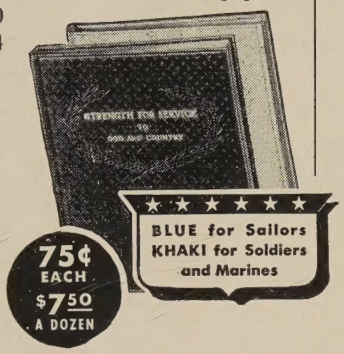

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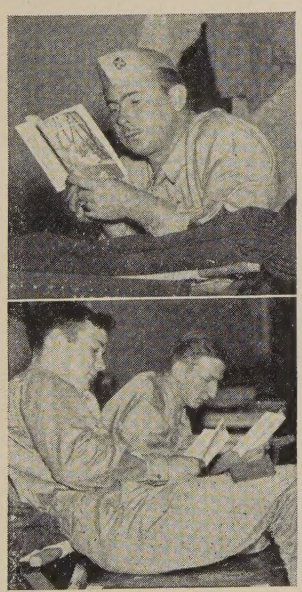

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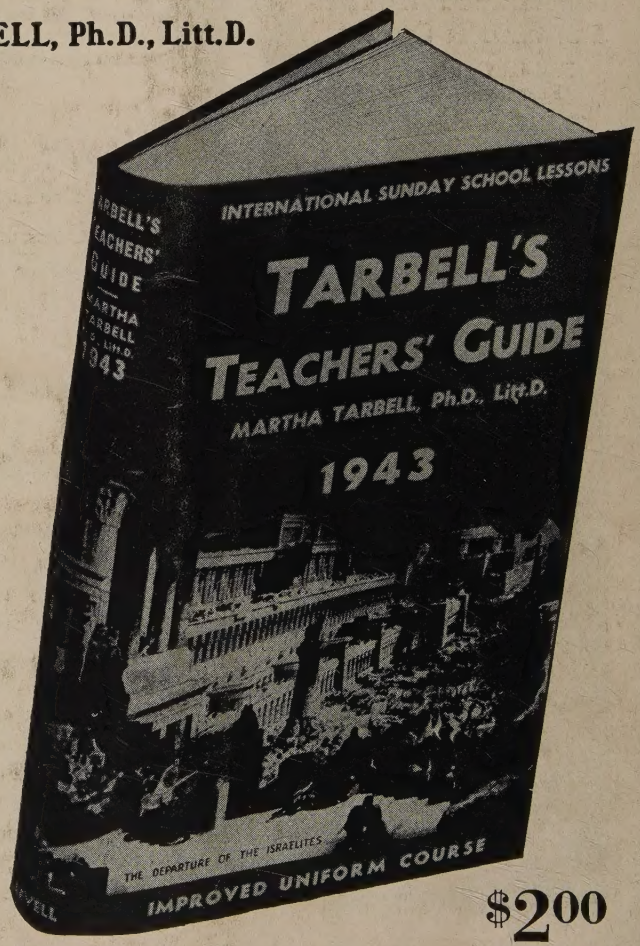

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